



# TALES

FANTASY



10¢

from  
the

# CRYPT



## UNIQUE STONECUTTING GRAVESTONES

NO... NO... IT CAN'T BE! THAT  
NAME HE'S CUTTING ON THE  
GRAVESTONE... THAT'S MY NAME!  
AND MY DATE OF BIRTH! BUT  
THE DATE OF DEATH... THAT'S  
TODAY!

ALEX KORDOVA  
PROP.

HERE LIES  
THEODORE  
J. WARKEN  
BORN APRIL 25, 1901  
DIED JUNE 9, 1950

IN  
MEMORY OF



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205 East 42nd Street, New York 17, New York

The following is a complete list of



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**THE HAUNT OF FEAR**

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**THE VAULT OF HORROR**

•  
**WEIRD SCIENCE**

•  
**WEIRD FANTASY**

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**MODERN LOVE**

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# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S TALE



WELL...HEH, HEH...I SEE IT'S TIME FOR ME TO TELL YOU ANOTHER *SPINE-TINGLING* TALE. ONE OF MY VAST COLLECTION OF *GALLIES* WHICH I KEEP HERE IN THE *CRYPT*! THIS STORY IS A FAVORITE OF MINE. ONE THAT I GUARANTEE WILL MAKE YOUR BLOOD RUN COLD AND YOUR HAIR STAND ON END! I CALL IT:

## THE THING FROM THE SEA!



YOU ARE ABOUT TO BEGIN A FRIGHTFUL ADVENTURE...CONCERNING A LUXURIOUS OCEAN LINER AND THE STRANGE AND UNEXPLAINED EVENTS THAT WILL OCCUR IN

STATEROOM 13!

YOU ARE ON A CROWDED PIER IN NEW YORK TRYING TO SECURE PASSAGE ON THE "OCEAN QUEEN," BOUND FOR ENGLAND! THE TRIP IS URGENT, AND YOU ARE PLEADING WITH THE PURSER...

BUT YOU MUST HAVE ONE BERTH OPEN... I'LL TAKE ANY GLASS!

WELL, AS A MATTER OF FACT, SIR... THAT IS... IF YOU'RE NOT SUPERSTITIOUS.



WHAT WONDERFUL LUCK! ONLY ONE OF THE TWO BERTHS IN STATE-ROOM 13 HAS BEEN TAKEN! YOU MAY THE PURSER AND BOARD THE SHIP! AND NOT A MOMENT TOO SOON... FOR AS YOU REACH THE TOP OF THE GANGPLANK...

GAST OFF THE FORWARD LINES.

MAKE READY FOR DEPARTURE...

LAST CALL... ALL ABOARD THAT'S GOING ASHORE...



YOU WATCH AS THE DOOR SLIPS AWAY... THE LITTLE TUG STRAINING AND PUSHING THE GIANT LINER OUT INTO MIDSTREAM? THEN...

MAY I TAKE YOUR BAGS AND SHOW YOU TO YOUR CABIN, SIR?

WHY THANK YOU, STEWARD?



AH... WHAT NUMBER STATE-ROOM DO YOU HAVE, SIR?

WHY... 13?



THE COLOR DRAINS FROM THE STEWARD'S CHEEKS... HIS EYES FILL WITH HORROR AS HE STARES AT YOU...

WHY, WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE, STEWARD?

OH... ER... NOTHING, SIR... NOTHING!



THE STEWARD SETS YOUR BAGS DOWN IN YOUR STATE-ROOM, CHECKS THE PORTHOLE TO SEE THAT IT IS SECURELY BOLTED, AND THEN GOES TOWARD THE DOOR! THERE IS A GLOOM OF FEAR ON HIS FACE...

WHAT IS IT, OLD MAN? WHAT IS THERE ABOUT THIS CABIN THAT FRIGHTENS YOU?

I... I DON'T KNOW, ONLY... ONLY



NO ONE WHO HAS EVER BEEN ASSIGNED THIS CABIN HAS COMPLETED HIS CROSSING IN IT! SOMETHING... SOMEBODY... FRIGHTENS THEM INTO LEAVING IT! WHY ONE PASSENGER EVEN WENT MAD FROM WHAT HE SAW HERE.

WHY...? WHAT DID THEY SEE? TELL ME!



THE STEWARD MUMBLES SOMETHING ABOUT GHOSTS AND SLIPS FROM YOUR GRASP! YOU WATCH AS HE HURRIES DOWN THE CORRIDOR, AND THEN YOU CLOSE THE DOOR.

YOU STOW YOUR BELONGINGS IN YOUR ASSIGNED BERTH AND SURVEY THE CABIN! IT IS SMALL, WITH ONE PORTHOLE... AND THE TWO BERTHS...

AFTER DINNER YOU DECIDE TO TURN IN! YOU ARE TIRED, AND THE FRESH SEA AIR HAS MADE YOU SLEEPY.

GHOSTS... BAH! HE'S PROBABLY PLAYING A TRICK ON ME. SUGGESTION AND STUFF.

HMM... I WONDER WHO HAS THE UPPER? HIS BAGGAGE IS HERE! HE'S PROBABLY UPON DECK SAYING GOODBYE TO THE GOOD-OLD U.S.A.!

OH, HELLO! I GUESS YOU MUST BE MY ROOM-MATE! GLAD TO MEET YOU!

SAME HERE! RATHER SMALL STATE-ROOM, ISN'T IT? HAD TO TAKE IT... ONLY ONE LEFT!

YES... THAT'S WHAT THEY TOLD ME! WELL... GUESS I'LL TURN IN! I'M PRETTY TIRED!

ME, TOO! GLAD YOU'RE HERE, THOUGH! THE STEWARD TOLD ME SOME ANFUL TARN ABOUT THIS ROOM.

OH, I WOULDN'T TAKE IT SERIOUSLY! HE'S PROBABLY PULLING YOUR LEG!

YES... WELL... GOOD-NIGHT!

YOU DON'T KNOW HOW LONG YOU'VE BEEN ASLEEP. ONLY... SUDDENLY YOUR EYES ARE OPEN! YOUR STATE-ROOM SMELLS STRANGE! THE PECULIAR SMELL OF DAMPNESS... STALE SEA-WATER! AND YOU ARE COLD... A BUSH OF AIR IS COMING FROM THE OPEN PORTHOLE.

YOU GET UP AND STUMBLE TO THE PORTHOLE IN THE DARKNESS! THE BOLTS HAVE BEEN LOOSENED AND THE FIRE SPRAY FROM THE SEA WETS YOUR FACE! YOU BLAM IT SHUT, BOLTING IT TIGHTLY! AND THEN, FROM THE BERTH ABOVE YOURS, COMES A RUDDY-CURLING CRY.

BLAST! THE PORTHOLE IS OPEN! I'D BETTER CLOSE IT OR RISK A NASTY COLO!

A-A-H-H-H!

WHAT THE...?

WITH A SINGLE LEAP, YOUR ROOMMATE SPRINGS FROM HIS BERTH TO THE FLOOR AND GASHES MADLY TOWARD THE STATEROOM DOOR...

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S WRONG? NO! NO! NO!



YOU LISTEN TO HIS FOOTSTEPS RUNNING FULL SPEED DOWN THE CORRIDOR? POOR OLD BOY? PROBABLY RE-SICK? YOU SHUT THE DOOR AND GROPE YOUR WAY BACK TO YOUR BERTH? YOUR EYES CLOSE AND YOU SLEEP AGAIN? THEN, DURING THE EARLY MORNING HOURS, YOU ARE AWAKENED BY A GROAN...

HMMMM? NOT A VERY GOOD SAILOR- POOR CHAP? LISTEN TO HIM MOAN



THE NEXT MORNING, THE SUN STREAMING THROUGH THE PORTHOLE AWAKENS YOU AND YOU DRESS QUICKLY! THE OUTFITS OF THE UPPER BERTH ARE DRAWN... YOU LEAVE WITHOUT DISTURBING YOUR ROOMMATE...

...PROBABLY ISN'T IN THE MOOD FOR BREAKFAST ANYWAY?



ON DECK, THE SHIP'S DOCTOR STOPS YOU...

...I WONDER IF YOU CAN TELL ME WHAT HAPPENED LAST NIGHT? WE FOUND YOUR ROOMMATE COVERING IN A PASSAGE... GASOLINE LIKE AN INKOT?

WHA...? YOU MEAN... HE DIDN'T COME BACK TO THE STATEROOM?



NO! WE HAVE HIM IN THE SHIP'S HOSPITAL! HE'S SUFFERING FROM SHOCK! CAN YOU TELL ME WHAT HE SAW THAT MIGHT HAVE CAUSED IT?

I... I HAVE NO IDEA!



LOOK! I HAVE A LARGE SAILOR! WHY DON'T YOU BRING YOUR THINGS OVER THERE AND SPEND THE REST OF YOUR TIME WITH ME?

OH, REALLY, DOCTOR? ARE YOU IMPLYING THAT THE RUMORS ABOUT STATEROOM 13 ARE TRUE?



YOU LAUGH, REFUSING THE DOCTOR'S INVITATION! YOU SPEND THE DAY RELAXING IN YOUR DECK-CHAIR... SWIMMING IN THE SHIP'S POOL... AND PLAYING CANASTA IN THE GAME ROOM AFTER DINNER! IT IS VERY LATE WHEN YOU RETURN TO YOUR ROOM...

HO-HUM? GAD, I'M TIRED! THAT BERTH CERTAINLY LOOKS INVITING!



YOU CHECK THE PORTHOLE TO SEE THAT IT IS SECURELY BOLTED AND THEN YOU STRETCH OUT ON YOUR BERTH! YOU LAY AWAKE THINKING ABOUT THE AGONIZING SCREAM OF YOUR ROOMMATE THE NIGHT BEFORE, WHEN

WHAT THE...? THE PORTHOLE IS OPEN AGAIN...AND...PHEW...THAT SMELL OF SEAWATER AND DECAY.



YOU GET UP AND CLOSE IT! YOU ARE FRIGHTENED! YOU DISTINCTLY REMEMBER CHECKING IT BEFORE YOU WENT TO BED! YOU TIGHTEN THE BOLTS WITH ALL OF YOUR STRENGTH AND STAND THERE FOR A WHILE, STARING OUT TO SEA! SUDDENLY...

WHAT'S THAT? A MOAN... COMING FROM THE UPPER BERTH...



YOU SPRING TO THE BERTH AND TEAR THE CURTAINS APART...THRUSTING YOUR HAND IN, TO DISCOVER IF THERE IS ANYONE THERE...

THAT SMELL...THAT NAUSEATING SMELL OF STAGNANT SALT-WATER! AND...AND...AAAAAHH!



YOU TAKE HOLD OF SOMETHING... SOMETHING COLD AND WET...ICY COLD...SOMETHING LIKE A MAN'S ARM! AND AS YOU PULL, THE CREATURE HURLS ITSELF FROM THE BERTH...A CLANNY, GOOY MASS!

KEEP AWAY!  
KEEP AWAY!



IN AN INSTANT, THE HORRIBLE MONSTROSITY HAS CARTED OUT OF THE STATEROOM DOOR!

GOOD LORD! SO THAT'S WHAT IT IS! I'LL FOLLOW IT!



YOU CHASE THE DARK SHADOW THROUGH THE DIMLY LIT PASSAGE, AND UP TO THE COMPARTMENTWAY!

BLASTED THING!  
IT'S GETTING AWAY!



YOU WATCH AS IT SEEMS TO GO OVER THE RAIL AND INTO THE SEA...

I...MUST BE DREAMING! THAT CURSED MEAL TONIGHT...IT...IT WON'T AGREE WITH ME!



YOU CANNOT RETURN TO THAT HORRIBLE ROOM! SO YOU WALK THE DECK, FINALLY CURLING UP IN A DECK CHAIR UNDER A STEAMER BLANKET TO SLEEP! A DREAMLESS SLEEP! THE MORNING SUN BLINDS YOU AS YOU ARE SHAKEN AWAKE...

OH... IT... IS IF YOU, CAPTAIN!

I WENT TO YOUR STATEROOM! YOU WEREN'T THERE! IS ANYTHING WRONG?

WELL, FRANKLY, CAPTAIN, THERE *IS*! SOMETHING VERY HORRIBLE HAPPENED IN MY STATEROOM LAST NIGHT! IT MIGHT HAVE BEEN MY IMAGINATION BUT...

WHY DON'T YOU LET ME FIX YOU UP IN THE OFFICERS' QUARTERS FOR THE REMAINDER OF THE TRIP?

LOOK HERE CAPTAIN! CAN'T WE GET TO THE BOTTOM OF THIS? THERE *MUST* BE A LOGICAL EXPLANATION!

YOU ARE RIGHT, SHIP ONLY, BUT CAN I DO? I'M INCLINED TO BOARD UP THE ROOM!



THAT WILL SOLVE NOTHING! PERHAPS IT WAS ONLY A STOWAWAY... TRYING TO BUSHEN PEOPLE OUT OF THAT STATEROOM SO THAT HE CAN SPEND THE REMAINDER OF THE TRIP IN COMFORT! A HAH! PERHAPS!

SHHH! THAT THOUGHT HAS NEVER OCCURED TO ME! YOU MAY BE RIGHT! I TELL YOU WHAT!

TONIGHT, I WILL STAND WATCH WITH YOU! IF HE SHOWS HIS FACE, WE'LL BE ABLE TO OVERPOWER HIM... TOGETHER!

GOOD, CAPTAIN! I'M GLAD YOU ARE TAKING A MORE REALISTIC ATTITUDE THAN YOUR SUPERSTITIOUS CREW!



YOU ARE RELIEVED THAT YOU WILL NOT HAVE TO SPEND ANOTHER NIGHT *ALONE* IN THAT ACCURSED STATEROOM! TOGETHER WITH THE CAPTAIN, TONIGHT YOU MAY SOLVE THIS BAFFLING PROBLEM!

SEE YOU THEN, AT ABOUT TEN!

YES... STATEROOM 31!



YOUR DAY IS SPENT ANXIOUSLY... AND TOWARDS EVENING, YOU FIND YOURSELF BECOMING NERVOUS! FINALLY, IT IS TEN O'CLOCK... AND YOU MAKE YOUR WAY DOWN TO THE STATEROOM!

AH, CAPTAIN! RIGHT ON TIME I SEE!

LET'S GO IN!



YOU CHECK THE PORTHOLE... YOU AND THE CAPTAIN... AND MAKE SURE THAT IT IS THIGHTLY BOLTED.

I'LL SIT HERE ON THE BERTH! WHY DON'T YOU SIT THERE ON MY WALISE...

GOOD! NOW... SHALL WE TURN OUT THE LIGHT.



THE ROOM IS DARK! ONLY THE HUM OF THE ENGINE IS HEARD... FAR BELOW, AND THE MUFFLED ROAR OF THE SEA, OUTSIDE! SUDDENLY...



YOU RUSH TO THE PORTHOLE AND SLAM IT SHUT: SOME STRANGE FORCE SEEMS TO RESIST YOU.

HERE WE GO, CAPTAIN! THINGS ARE BEGINNING TO POP!

I... I... AAAAAH!



YOU SPIN AROUND! THE *FRANK*, THE HORRIBLE CREATURE OF LAST NIGHT IS RISING OUT OF THE TOP BERTH! THE CAPTAIN IS SPRINGING BACK...

THAT'S... THAT'S IT! LET'S GET IT, CAPTAIN!

NO! NO! IT CAN'T BE YOU... YOU'RE DEAD! I MURDERED YOU!



I KILLED YOU... RIGHT THERE ...IN THAT BERTH! PUSHED YOU OUT THAT PORTHOLE INTO THE SEA! YOU CAN'T BE... YOU CAN'T...



HORRIFIED, YOU WATCH! THE CAPTAIN SLUMPS TO THE FLOOR... WHITE AS CHALK! THEN, SATISFIED, THE *FRANK* TURNS AND HURLS ITSELF OUT OF THE PORTHOLE...

GOOD LORD!



THE CAPTAIN IS DEAD... LITERALLY FRIGHTENED TO DEATH! AND AS YOU TURN TO LOOK AFTER THE THING, YOU ARE ASTOUNDED TO SEE THAT...

THE PORTHOLE IS CLOSED AND... BOLTED!



WELL, HEN! AND THAT'S THE STORY, DEAR READER! THE CAPTAIN RECEIVED THE SHOCK OF HIS LIFE, EN? WELL, HE SHOULD HAVE REALIZED YOU CAN'T GET AWAY WITH MURDER... NOT EVEN AT SEA... ON YOUR OWN SHIP! OH, BY THE WAY! IF YOU EVER *REALLY* SAIL, THE "OCEAN QUEEN," ASK FOR STATEROOM THIRTEEN! TELL 'EM I SENT YOU!



IF YOU LIKE MY TALES AND HAVE TIME TO ASSE... SEND ME A FEW LINES! WRITE TO: THE GIMP-KEEPER, RM. 70-1, DEPT. 90, 225 LAFAYETTE ST., NYC 10, N.Y.

# END OF THE SEARCH

The sun had already gone down behind the heavy jungle growth along both banks of the sluggish stream, when Canady beached his flimsy boat and staggered ashore. A hundred yards back from the swampy water's edge was a village he had never seen before... a primitive circle of weathered huts he hadn't known existed on this unmapped offshoot of the Amazon River. But there was good reason why it had escaped his notice during all the time he had been managing the Plantation. In his fifteen years in the tropics, he had never before ventured so far into Brazil's interior.

Canady was led to a man's hut by two belonging to the village chief, and sampled with the manners of the people. In that time he gave only passing notice to the grim-faced natives who had escorted him here from his boat... hardly noticed the cold and appraising eyes that watched him settle on the cane floor opposite the Chief.

"They don't like my being here," Canady thought to himself as he pretended to rearrange his belt, his fingers moving methodically to make certain that his revolver was in its holster, just in case. "They're an ugly-looking bunch... and they hate my hanging into their village as much as I hate being here! But there's no choice... I've got to find a clue to Drucker's whereabouts!"

Canady spoke... sometimes searching for words to express himself, sometimes in a surge of blind Drucker... his plantation foreman... had disappeared a week before on an inspection trip, but vanished from sight as if swallowed up by the earth. He had come to find him... would pay anyone who knew where Drucker was. Had they seen a tall man with red hair... a man who had a flame-colored mustache?

One of the guides rose from behind him, and in the evening silence Canady watched him cross the hut to the door. Watched the native's tall foot as it passed momentarily over a grass mat and moved a several inches from its former resting place.

There was an object hidden under the mat and Canady looked at himself wondering whether the chief and his grim-faced tribesmen realized he had seen it. Canady began to rise, groping for his gun... and his hand trembled as it touched the empty holster. They knew... they had watched his face when he had seen the object!

And even as they began to close in on him from all sides of the hut, Canady was conscious of the shrunken human head there on the floor, underneath the grass mat that had been moved... the head with the red hair looking so ludicrous over the shrivelled skin... the head with the bushy flame-colored mustache!

In the language of the jungle people Can-



THERE WERE FOUR OF THEM. RICH, SPOILED, BORED! THEY HAD ALL THE MONEY THEY WANTED, THEY HAD BEEN EVERYWHERE AND DONE EVERYTHING! AND SO, WHEN SOMEONE SUGGESTED THAT THEY TRY THE MAGIC OF THE ANCIENTS, THEY BREWED...

# a FATAL CAPER!



IT WAS DEER BOREDOM THAT MADE MARYLOU ANDERSON BUY THE DUSTY OLD BOOK IN THE DUSTY OLD BOOKSTORE...

A BOOK ON MAGIC? HOW WONDERFUL!

PLEASE DO NOT TRY ANY OF THE SPELLS IN IT, MISS. I'VE HEARD THAT... THEY ACTUALLY... *WICK!*



PETER, DO YOU SEE *THIS?* ISN'T IT JUST TOO DUCKY? CALL UP JIM AND WINNIE, THIS INSTANT! INVITE THEM OVER. ...

WHAT BOOK? YOU DON'T TAKE ANY STOCK IN *THAT* JUNK, DO YOU? OH, WELL... MAYBE IT'LL BE BETTER THAN SITTING AROUND LISTENING TO SOMEBODY'S POEMS...



THAT NIGHT, IN JIM ROBERT'S ROOMS, THE FOUR GOT TOGETHER WITH SHOUTS OF LAUGHTER...

BABY, IT TOOK ME HOURS TO GET THESE THINGS!

WHERE'D YOU EVER DREAM UP ALL THIS, HARTLYN? TOADS' TONGUES? A LAMPING'S EAR? THE FOOT OF A OAT-OLD BAB!

IT GIVES ME THE GREENS BUT... I LOVE IT! HA! HA!

FIRST THE HAIR OF A BABY MOUSE...

THE NAILS OF A DOG BORN DEAD...

THEN THE WING OF A BABY BAT!



STIR, STIR! WHISPER WORDS TO TOUCH THE CAR...

RELTAK, HOO'S BANE!

DOGS' TONGUE, WITCH'S BUTH...



WE'RE ALL SICK OF EVERYTHING! I THOUGHT THAT WE COULD TRY SOME MAGIC SPELLS... OLD SPELLS WORKED IF GARLIGSTRO AND DEE! THEY WON'T WORK, OF COURSE... BUT IT WILL BE FUN TO TRY...



NOW TIP OF EAR AND SPIT OF TONGUE! NOSE FROM A DEAD MAN'S GRACE!

FINGER OF DUST FROM A MUMMY CASE!



AAAAA GUNNY! LOOK!

OH, MY...



WHA... WHAT WAS IT? I... I DON'T SEE...

SOME MONSTER, WANT' AN ANFEL THING... HELP ME! MARTLYN... YOU ALL RIGHT? MARTLYN... ANSWER ME!



LOSD IN THE DARK ROOM, MARYLYN SCREAMS! HER HANDS BEAT UP AT SOMETHING VAST, UNSEEN! HER GREEN-TINTED FACE WRITHES BILLY IN STARK TERROR.

EEEEYYAAAGHH!!



GOT TO... HAVE LIGHT!  
GOT TO... KNOW WHA...  
WHAT HAPPENED



L-LOOK!  
MARYLYN'S  
SHOE...  
AND  
STOMP-  
ING

WHATEVER...  
IT WAS, MUST  
HAVE RIPPED  
HER... RIGHT  
OUT OF  
THEM!

MARYLYN!  
OH MY POOR,  
DEAR  
MARYLYN...



LET'S GET .OUT  
OF HERE! CALL  
THE POLICE! GET  
HELP FROM  
*SOMEBODY!*

JIM! JIM,  
NO! LISTEN...

WE CAN GET  
HER BACK OUR-  
SELVES, OLD MAN!  
RELAX! RELAX!  
MAYBE IT'S JUST  
A MATTER OF  
ANOTHER SPELL  
OR SOMETHING



I DON'T LIKE THIS!  
MAYBE IN A SISOY  
OR SOMETHING...  
BUT THERE ARE A  
LOT OF THINGS  
LIKE THIS THAT  
SCIENCE HAS NEVER  
EXPLAINED! WE'D  
BETTER

OH, JIM  
DARLING,  
HUSH UP!  
WE HAVE  
TO SAVE  
MARYLYN  
OURSELVES!

OUR FAULT, OLD  
MAN! HERE, THE  
LOOKS LIKE SOME-  
THING A *SEANCE*  
TO SPEAK TO THE  
DEAD!



THIS IS *GAFF!*  
WHY DO WE EVER  
*GAFF* THIS?  
LISTEN, I

KEEP YOUR  
HANDS  
*STEADY*,  
JIM!

STOP SHAKING,  
OLD MAN!  
*CONCENTRATE!*  
CONCENTRATE  
ON MARYLYN



PERFECT... PLEASE... SOMEBODY... SOMEBODY... ME!

IT'S MARYLYN!  
SHE'S CALLING  
TO ME!

OH, MY  
HEAVEN!  
OH... OH...





JIM! GIVE ME A HAND!  
HELP ME! SOMETHING  
HAS HOLD OF ME.  
I CAN'T SEEM TO  
FIGHT IT OFF!

JIM, HOLD  
ME! I'M  
SO... SO  
SCARED!



AAAAAGHHH!

HE'S GONE, TOO! ONLY  
HIS COAT-SLEEVE, RIPPED  
OFF! NOW I AM GOING  
FOR THE POLICE! THIS HAS  
GONE TOO FAR...



NO! NO! NOT THE  
POLICE! I WON'T  
STAY HERE ALONE!  
JIM, YOU AND I  
WE CAN DO IT  
BY A DIFFERENT  
SPELL!

WHEE, YOU'RE  
CRAZY! LET  
GO OF ME!  
PLEASE  
CALM DOWN!



LISTEN TO  
ME! I WON'T  
LET YOU GO  
FOR THE POLICE!  
WE STARTED ALL  
THIS! WE CAN  
FINISH IT! BUT  
YOU MUST HELP  
ME! JIM!

ALL RIGHT!  
I'LL DO WHAT-  
EVER I CAN...



HEERLF USSER LÖÖÖÖÖ  
IMM THREE SÖÖÖÖÖ.

DO YOU HEAR? THEY ARE  
CALLING TO US, FROM OVER  
YONDER, FROM SOMEWHERE  
BEYOND THE GRAVE...



I DON'T LIKE IT  
BUT I'LL GO  
THROUGH WITH  
IT

STEADY, NOW!  
I'M GOING TO  
READ THE  
SPELL.



BY THE SECRETS OF THE NINE,  
BY THE SWORD OF SAMECH AND  
THE SPINNING CHARIOT! BY  
THE BAPTISM OF THE FOUR ELE-  
MENTS AND THE KEYS OF  
THE FIFTY GATES, I SUMMON  
YOU! APPEAR! BRING BACK  
THOSE YOU HAVE TAKEN!



HIS NERVES EXACERBATED, JIM COLLAPSED IN A DEAD FAINT! HE DOES NOT SEE THE MONSTROUS HORROR BEING OVER HIM...

DOES NOT FEEL HIMSELF BEING LIFTED AND CARRIED...

JIM OPENS HIS EYES... TO FIND HIMSELF RECLINING IN A COFFIN... JUST AS THE BLOATING MONSTER IS SHUTTING THE HEAVY LID DOWN ON HIM!

NO... NOT DON'T... DON'T...!

WITH A THUD, THE COFFIN CLOSES!

HE'S HAMMERING ME IN... CAN HEAR THE HAMMER... HITTING THE NAILS... SUFFOCATE... IN HERE... GETTING HARDER TO BREATHE...

ALL RIGHT, PETE! THE JOKE'S GONE FAR ENOUGH! HE LOOKED HALF DEAD WITH FEAR, IN THAT COFFIN. LET'S OPEN IT UP!

SURE, RIGHT AWAY! BOY, WAS HE EVER SCARED!

JIM CURE FELL FOR ALL THAT HUMBO- JUMBO! WHERE'S?

SPEAK UP! PETE! I-I CAN'T GET IT UP! IT'S STUCK!

PETE! JIM WILL SUFFOCATE IN THERE!

BESIDES... WE TOOK A BODY OUT TO MAKE ROOM FOR HIM!

WE'VE GOT TO PUT IT BACK! COME ON BACK TO THE CAR, WE'LL GET SOME TOOLS!

YOU'RE NEXT, MISTER! AND YOU CAN REST ASSURED... I GOING TO BURY YOU... DEEP!

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IT WORKED OUT PERFECTLY! ALL THOSE SCENIC EFFECTS... SMOKE AND THINGS... BUT WE'VE GOT TO GET THAT COFFIN OPEN!

PETER, HURRY!

I AM, I AM! SOOO SORRY, I DON'T WANT ANYTHING TO HAPPEN TO JIM EITHER, YOU KNOW!

WE'VE GOT TO WORK FAST! SOMEBODY'S LIABLE TO FIND THE DEAD BODY WE TOOK OUT OF THAT COFFIN AND CARRIED AWAY...

USUALLY, DON'T REMIND ME! MY HANDS FEEL FUNNY JUST AT THE PROSPECT OF IT!

LOOK! THE COFFIN IS GONE!

YOU DON'T SUPPOSE ANYONE WAS SUPPOSED TO *BURY* THAT COFFIN.

THIS IS HORRIBLE! JIM WILL BE *BURIED* ALIVE!

NO, NO! WE CAN STOP THAT! HURRY! WE HAVE TO FIND IT...

NOT OVER HERE!

NOBODY HERE, EITHER! WINNIE, DO YOU SEE ANYONE DIGGING A GRAVE?

NO! NO, I DON'T! BUT WE MUST FIND JIM! WE HAVE TO.

Half an hour later...

CARETAKER... DID YOU JUST... BURY A COFFIN?

DID IT? YOU HAVE TO *DIG* IT UP! THE MAN IN IT *ISN'T* DEAD!

WHAT WINNIE MEANS IS... A JOKE! YOU KNOW... YOU'VE GOT TO OPEN THAT COFFIN!

I WOULDN'T OPEN THAT COFFIN FOR ALL THE GOLD IN FORT KNOX! I BURIED HIM PLENTY DEEP! THAT MAN DIED FROM... *LEPROSY*! ANYONE WHO TOUCHED THE CORPSE WILL GET IT!





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...FOR SCIENTIFIC SUSPENSE STORIES AT  
THEIR ILLUSTRATED BEST READ...



ANOTHER  
"NEW TREND"  
SURE-FIRE WINNER!



**ON SALE NOW**  
**AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!**

## BACKFIRE

**E**ver since she insisted on buying the dog, he had hated the big golden animal his wife brought into the house! As far back as he could remember he had been afraid of dogs, even the tiny wriggling pups he saw in the Pet Shop windows... but this monster she had brought home was huge, even for a Great Dane!

The savage hate he felt toward the dog she called Hamlet grew with each passing day... and the hate was matched by his awful fear! Fear which multiplied until the mere sight of the animal was enough to start the cold chills running down his spine! And what was most frightening of all was his realization that his hatred was returned by Hamlet! If he wasn't careful... well, the dog was tremendously powerful...

.....

It was all set... his wife would be away from the house for several hours! With meticulous care he examined the basement room he had hired up... the room with no means of escape! The metal tub in one corner was all set for the bath he was going to give the dog in a few minutes... Hamlet's last bath!

He examined the pipes leading to the tub. With the faucets removed like this, the water which was even at this moment splashing in

could be turned off only from the outside! And with the lock fixed this way, all he would have to do would be to slam the door and it would be impossible to get out! The plan couldn't fail!

He smiled to himself... he would unchain Hamlet from the post right outside and bring him into the room. With the door shut on his way out, and the water running, he would never have to worry about that animal again!

He whirled at the sound behind him, his eyes wide with terror! The door to the little room had slammed shut... and the water... there was no way to turn it off from in here!

• • • • •

Even standing on tip-toes on the edge of the tub the water reached almost to his lips! There was scarcely six inches left between the ceiling and the surface of the water! By tilting his head far back he was able to keep the air trickling in through his nostrils... but the water was rising by the second! For the hundredth time he screamed, at the top of his lungs: "H-HELP! HAMLET! HELP!"

But the only sound he could hear in response was the arrush of water... the flood that was even now beginning to surge up to his ears... into his mouth... pounding against his tightly-shut eyes!

He opened his mouth for a last scream for help... and there was the bruising impact of his head striking the cement ceiling! There was no air left in the flooded room... even the surging sound of the water had stopped! All he could hear was a thin bubbling sound... which seemed to start deep in his strangling throat...



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# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Drag over that battered COFFIN, kiddies, and stretch your palpitating CORPSES on the warm-eaten lid. (Being very careful, of course, not to jar the warm-eaten contents!) ... as it's once again time for another of our GRAVE discussions! The first item on my musty old list of things to DIG UP with you is the NEW TITLE of my now familiar magazine! As you no doubt are aware, my magazine has always been tops in TERROR ... the first word in HORROR ... and unsurpassed in SUSPENSE! So when my frightened publisher first agreed to publish my tales ... which I keep here in the CRYPT ... we called the magazine THE CRYPT OF TERROR! Later, however, the old coo's ulcer has been eating up, and every time I've bandied him the latest issue, his seeing the word TERROR in the title has given him a bad case of hiccup! This, naturally, aggravated the old boy's tummy even more ... so for his sake, as well as for the sakes of all my readers with weak tummies, I reluctantly agreed to change the title of my TERROR-IPIC mag to TALES FROM THE CRYPT! But do not be alarmed, all you FIENDISH FANS! To paraphrase a phrase, a CORPSE by any other name is still a CORPSE! And let me assure you, THE CRYPT OF TERROR by any other name will still be ... ah ... TERROR-ABLE! Now let's dig into the MAIL MAUSOLEUM ... which is CHOKED full of your epistolary gems ... and peruse a few! (God, did I say THAT?)

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I hate to admit this, you old geezer, but your magazine is the very best HORROR-TERROR book I have ever read-burnt-nosed! I have an almost complete collection of THE CRYPT OF TERROR. However, I do not have issues No. 4, No. 9, and No. 16. I wrote to your publisher for them, and he informed me that these particular issues were sell-outs! So I am appealing to you. Please print this letter in your "corner." I will offer to pay as high as 75c apiece to anyone who can send me these issues in good condition!

Ed Beep  
10 Ocean Parkway  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

O.K. Ed, there's your letter ... good luck! For 75c apiece, I'd send you my own personal copies ... but I've never kept them! Can't stand to have them around ... they scare the daylight out of me!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I want you to know that everytime a CRYPT OF TERROR is put on sale at my candy-store, I will buy it and will HAUNT you. You don't scare me!

A. (NMD) Ghost  
(No address given!)

So haunt me, Ghost! I dare you! Only you better not show up-around the CRYPT! I might scare the SHEET off you! Go dissolve your ectoplasm in a vat of sulphuric acid!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Your magazine leaves me cold!

The Occupant of Slab 13  
City Morgue Refrigerator  
Dodge City, Kansas

Why don't you give yourself a hot-foot with an acetylene-torch!

## CRYPT-KEEPER'S LITERARY SELECTIONS

A further listing of my favorite fine mystery literature, which you can obtain at your local library!

H. P. Lovecraft. Lurker-at the Threshold  
Karlson, Boris. And the Darkness Falls  
Eugene Stoker. The Mystery of the Sea

And so, dear readers, don't forget to tell all your friends about the new title of my magazine ... I wouldn't want anyone to miss this issue because he was still looking for the CRYPT OF TERROR! And keep your letters pouring in ... tell me what type of stories you like best! Just write to: THE CRYPT-KEEPER, Rm. 708, Dept. 20, 325 Lafayette Street, N. Y. C. 12, N. Y.

# R... DEATH!



PERHAPS IT WAS THE FACT THAT OUR CHILDHOOD WAS MISERABLE...OUR PARENTS BEING POVERTY-STRIKEN! PERHAPS IT WAS THE FACT THAT I, JANET BENNETT, HAD REMAINED UNMARRIED, AND HAD CONTINUED TO LIVE WITH MY BROTHER GREGG, THEREBY INCREASING HIS RESPONSIBILITIES! WHATEVER THE REASON,GREGG HAD SHUT HIMSELF OFF FROM THE WORLD TO STUDY... TO BETTER HIMSELF...HIS LIFE...AND MINE...

GREGG! YOU MUST GET SOME SLEEP!

LEAVE ME ALONE, SIS! I'LL BE ALL RIGHT...



HIS DAYS OCCUPIED IN HIS REGULAR JOB,GREGG SAT UP HALF THE NIGHT PORING OVER TEXT BOOKS! I KNEW THAT SUCH HARD WORK...CONSTANT STUDY...WOULD HAVE ITS EFFECT! HE GREW PALE...HIS EYES CLOSED...

GREGG! YOU MUST STOP DRIVING YOURSELF! YOU WILL BECOME ILL...

I AM TAKING CARE OF MYSELF, JANET! DON'T WORRY ABOUT ME!



BUT IT COULD NOT *HELP* BUT *WORRY*? GREGG'S CONDITION GREW PROGRESSIVELY WORSE! AT LAST I COULD RESIST NO LONGER! I BEGGED GREGG TO LET ME CALL IN OUR FAMILY DOCTOR!

ALL RIGHT? ALL RIGHT? LET THE OLD DOCT COME OVER AND EXAMINE ME IF IT WILL MAKE YOU ANY HAPPIER?

OH, YES, GREGG? YOU *HAVE* BEEN LOOKING RATHER BAD LATELY!



DR. WENTWORTH EXAMINED GREGG THOROUGHLY...AND AFTER HE HAD FINISHED, HE TOOK ME ASIDE!

THERE IS NOTHING REALLY WRONG WITH HIM, MISS BENNETT! HE IS WORKING TOO HARD! HE EATS HASTILY, READS TOO LONG...AND *FORGIES*! I WILL GIVE YOU A PRESCRIPTION WHICH OUGHT TO *HELP*!

THANK YOU, DOCTOR! I FEEL RELIEVED!



DR. WENTWORTH GAVE ME THE PRESCRIPTION, AND LEFT! GREGG INSISTED THAT THE PRESCRIPTION BE FILLED BY A CHEMIST IN THE NEIGHBORHOOD, AN OLD MAN WHOSE SHOP WAS OLD TOO... OLD-FASHIONED AND DEVOID OF THE GLITTER OF THE MODERN DRUG STORE! AS I ENTERED THE SHOP...

YES, MADAM? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I... I'D LIKE TO FILL THIS PRESCRIPTION!



THE OLD MAN TOOK THE SLIP OF PAPER IN HIS WITHERED, SONEY HANDS AND STUDIED IT FOR A MOMENT...

THIS PRESCRIPTION CONTAINS A RARE DRUG! I HOPE I HAVE SOME OF IT! IF NOT... I'LL HAVE TO ORDER IT!

WELL THEN, WILL YOU DELIVER IT WHEN YOU HAVE MADE IT UP?



THAT EVENING, THE MEDICINE ARRIVED, AND I SAW THAT GREGG TOOK IT BEFORE DINNER!

THERE? DOES IT TASTE BAD?

RATHER TASTELESS! NOT TOO BAD, SIS?



I WAS CAREFUL TO SEE THAT GREGG TOOK HIS MEDICINE BEFORE EVERY MEAL, AND THEN, ONE EVENING...

GREGG? YOU'RE NOT STUDYING

I... I DON'T FEEL LIKE IT, TONIGHT, JARET!



HE BEGAN TO PACE THE FLOOR AS IF UNDECIDED WHAT TO DO WITH HIMSELF...AND THEN...

I THINK I'LL GO OUT TONIGHT. JARET? TAKE IN A SNOW? DON'T WAIT UP FOR ME...

OH... ALL RIGHT, GREGG?



I REACHED AT LAST GREGG HAD BROKEN AWAY FOR AN EVENING OF RELAXATION? I WATCHED HIM AS HE SAUNTERED DOWN THE STREET? I DON'T KNOW WHAT TIME HE CAME IN... BUT THE NEXT MORNING, AT BREAKFAST, HIS EYES GLEAMED...

OH, GREGG? YOU LOOK SO WELL?

AND I FEEL IT, TOO! I HAD A GRAND TIME LAST NIGHT? MET SOME OLD COLLEGE CHUMS?



THAT NIGHT GREGG WENT OUT AGAIN, AND AGAIN THE NEXT NIGHT? HE WAS A CHANGED MAN... HE BECAME A LOVER OF PLEASURE... A HUNTER OF RESTAURANTS AND CRY PLACES? I WAS HAPPY AND YET... ALTHOUGH I KNEW NOT WHY... I WAS FRIGHTENED...

WHY DO YOU LOOK AT ME SO STRANGELY, SIS? WHAT DO YOU SEE?

I... I DON'T KNOW, GREGG?



THE DAYS WENT BY AND GREGG CONTINUED TO TAKE HIS MEDICINE... REVIEWING THE PRESCRIPTION FROM THE OLD CHEMIST WHEN IT RAN OUT? ONE MORNING...

GREGG? I... I... GOODBYE, LOB?

WHAT? YOU SAY SOMETHING, SIS?



HIS EYES FOLLOWED MY STARE? A FINGER... THE LITTLE FINGER OF HIS RIGHT HAND... WAS ALL WRINKLED AND WITHERED? IT LOOKED... LIKE IT WAS PUTTING AWAY...



GREGG QUICKLY WRAPPED THE FORTNITE LOOKING DIRT IN HIS HANDKERCHIEF AND STAMMERED...

I... I BURNED IT... LET ME BANDAGE IT FOR YOU, GREGG?



HORROR FLOODED INTO GREGG'S EYES? HE JUMPED UP, DREW AWAY FROM MY OUTSTRETCHED HANDS...

NO? NO? I'LL DO IT UP MYSELF? LEAVE ME BE...

WHY... GREGG?



THAT NIGHT, AFTER GREGG WENT OUT, I CALLED ON WINTHURST... BUT HE HAD GONE OUT OF TOWN? HE WOULD NOT BE BACK TILL MORNING? I SAT STARRING OUT OF THE WINDOW... AND ABOUT MID-NIGHT I WAS AWAKENED BY THE KEY IN THE LOCK...

GREGG? WHAT'S HAPPENED TO YOUR HAND?

I... I CUT IT? WHY DO YOU SAY?



I CANNOT DESCRIBE THE FEAR THAT CLEFT INTO MY HEART AS GREGG SNAPPED AT ME! THERE WAS A STRANGE LOOK IN HIS EYES! A LOOK I HAD NEVER SEEN BEFORE!

I AM GOING TO MY ROOM! BRING MY BREAKFAST TRAY UP IN THE MORNING AND LEAVE IT AT THE DOOR!



THE NEXT MORNING, I FOLLOWED GREGG'S INSTRUCTIONS, LEAVING HIS TRAY! THEN I RUSHED OVER TO SEE DR. WERTWORTH.

MY DEAR! YOU SAY HE *STILL* TAKES THE STUFF!

YES! REGULARLY!



WELL, WHERE DOES HE HAVE THE PRESCRIPTION FILE OF

AT THE OLD CHEMISTS' ON BROOK STREET.



DR. WERTWORTH BOY HIS COAT AND WE HURRIED TO THE OLD-FASHION CHEMIST SHOP! THE OLD MAN GREETED US AND THE DOCTOR PROCEEDED TO ASK SOME QUESTIONS.

OH, YES! MR. BENNETT HAS BEEN IN REGULARLY TO FILL THAT PRESCRIPTION! CONTAINS A RARE DRUG WHICH I'LL HAVE TO ORDER, NOW! I ONLY HAD A LITTLE, HAD IT A LONG TIME TOO.

HEHEHE! LET ME SEE THE DRUG YOU USED, SIR!



THE OLD MAN WENT INTO THE BACK AND RETURNED WITH A MUSTY CARBIDE, WHICH HE PREED OVER FOR THE DOCTOR.

PHEN! WHAT IS THIS? THIS IS NOT WHAT I PRESCRIBED! ON YES, I SEE THE LABEL IS RIGHT, BUT I TELL YOU THIS IS *NOT THE DRUG!*

I... I... I'VE HAD IT FOR SOME TIME. MAYBE A FEW YEARS! I... I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO SAY!



THE DOCTOR TOOK THE CARBIDE, AND WE LEFT...

DOCTOR WERTWORTH! I SHOULD LIKE TO KNOW WHAT MY BROTHER HAS BEEN TAKING FOR THE PAST MONTH OR SO.

FRANKLY, MISS BENNETT, I *DO NOT KNOW!* I SHALL HAVE IT ANALYZED BUT I HAVE A FEELING THAT THIS GOES BEYOND THE REALM OF CHEMISTRY AND MEDICAL SCIENCE!



THAT EVENING MY BROTHER GREGG DID NOT GO OUT AS USUAL! HE CAME DOWN FROM HIS ROOM AND ANNOUNCED...

I HAVE HAD MY LITTLE FLING, BUT NOW IT IS OVER! I AM GOING BACK TO MY ROOMS! I DO NOT WANT TO BE DISTURBED! I WILL REMAIN IN MY ROOM. MY MEALS WILL BE SENT UP AND LEFT OUTSIDE! IS THAT CLEAR?

YES, GREGG!



GREGG WENT BACK TO HIS ROOM, AND THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN I PLACED HIS BREAKFAST TRAY BEFORE THE DOOR...

GREGG? BREAKFAST?

LEAVE IT AND GO!



I STARTED DOWNSTAIRS, AND THEN REMEMBERED SOMETHING I WANTED FROM MY BEDROOM AS I STARTED BACK...

YOU'RE SPYING ON ME!  
I DON'T WANT YOU SPYING  
ON ME!

GREGG! YOUR ARMS!  
THEY'RE ALL BANDAIDED



I RUSHED TO HIM, BUT HE PICKED UP HIS TRAY AND SLAMMED HIS DOOR... LOOKING IT...

OH, GREGG?... DOB... GREGG!



I WENT DOWNSTAIRS, AND CALLED THE DOCTOR...

ANY NEWS, DOCTOR?  
I'VE SENT IT OFF, MISS BENNETT! IT WILL BE ABOUT A WEEK BEFORE WE KNOW!



WHEN I DID NOT SEE GREGG FOR SEVERAL DAYS, I CALLED DR. WESTWORTH AGAIN... AND TOLD HIM OF GREGG'S WRINKLED, ROTTED FINGER... HIS BANDAIDED HAND AND HIS BANDAIDED ARMS...

I HAVEN'T HEARD FROM THE LABORATORY YET, MISS BENNETT, BUT I THINK I'D BETTER COME OVER...

YES... DOCTOR?



DR. WESTWORTH ARRIVED AND WENT UPSTAIRS! I HEARD HIM NOISE AND SO ON! AFTER A WHILE HE CAME DOWNSTAIRS! THERE WAS UNUTTERABLE HORROR IN HIS EYES! HE GULPED... STEADYING HIMSELF BY GRASPING THE BANISTER...

I HAVE SEEN HIM! CHOKED! I HAVE EXAMINED HIM! AND I AM IN MY SENSES! I HAVE DEALT WITH DEATH ALL MY LIFE... BUT I... NEVER... NOTHING... LIKE THIS... NO, NO!



HE COVERED HIS FACE WITH HIS HANDS AS IF TO SHUT OUT A HORRID SIGHT... AND THEN HE TURNED!

DO NOT SEND FOR ME AGAIN, MISS BENNETT! I CAN DO NOTHING IN THIS HOUSE!

BUT... DOCTOR... DOCTOR?





THE NEXT DAY, AS I WAS CROSSING THE STREET IN FRONT OF THE HOUSE, I HAPPENED TO GAZE UP AT GREEN'S WINDOW.

WHA... OH-GASP!



THE BLIND WAS BEING DRAWN BACK, NOT BY A HAND, BUT A ROTTED STUMP. A BEAST'S PAW SHAPELESS HORRIBLE! AND BEHIND IT, TWO EYES OF BURNING FLAME GLARED AT ME AMIDST SOMETHING AS FORMLESS AS GHOSTLY AS THE ROTTING FAN.



I CALLED DR. WENTWORTH AS SOON AS I GOT INTO THE HOUSE...AND, ALTHOUGH AT FIRST HE REFUSED, MY FRIGHTENED TEARS FINALLY PERSUADED HIM TO COME! WE SAT DOWN IN THE SITTING ROOM...

THE CHEMIST I SENT THE DRUG TO WAS *UNABLE TO ANALYSE IT!* ITS CHEMICAL COMPOSITION WAS UNKNOWN TO HIM ALTHOUGH THE RESULTS OF TESTS SHOWED THAT IT WAS SIMILAR IN ACTION TO THE *DIGESTIVE ENZYMES* IN THE HUMAN BODY! YOUR BROTHER IS *BEING DIGESTED ALIVE!*

EEEEEEK!

PLEASE, DOCTOR! YOU MUST TELL ME WHAT IS WRONG WITH GREGG!

I AM AFRAID, MISS BENNETT, THAT THIS WHOLE EPISODE IS MOST UNNATURAL! THERE ARE FORCES INVOLVED HERE - SUPERNATURAL FORCES - THAT WE TODAY KNOW LITTLE ABOUT!



SOMETHING WET HAD FALLEN ON MY HAND! I LOOKED UP! THE GELING WAS BLACK AND DRIPPING...

THAT... THAT'S GREGG'S ROOM UP THERE!

SO BOOM! SO BOOM! STAY HERE!



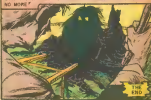
DR. WENTWORTH GRABBED HIS WALKING CANE AND HASTENED UP THE STAIRS! IGNORING HIS ORDERS TO REMAIN IN THE SITTING ROOM, I FOLLOWED! AS HE PUNGE DOWN THE DOOR, THERE CAME FORTH A FEARFUL SCREAM... NOT A HUMAN VOICE, BUT MORE LIKE THAT OF AN ANIMAL...

THERE IT IS... IN THE CORNER...

OH, NO...



THERE UPON THE FLOOR WAS A DARK PUTRID MASS... NEITHER, NEITHER LIQUID NOR SOLID. BUBBLING... AND OUT OF THE MIST OF IT SHOWN TWO BURNING POINTS, LIKE EYES! AS THE THING LURSED FOR US, DR. WENTWORTH TEARS IN HIS EYES... STRUCK AT IT WITH HIS CANE... AGAIN AND AGAIN...UNTIL IT LIVED NO MORE!



THE END

IN THE SPRING...



...A YOUNG MAN'S FANCY...



...ASHLY TURNING TO THOUGHTS OF...



# IMPENDING DOOM!



LOVVA MIKE? WILL YOU LOOK AT THIS? WHY IN THE WORLD DID I DRAW THIS FACE? I DIDN'T EVEN REALIZE I WAS DOING IT! FUNNY THE EXPRESSION IS ONE OF EXTREME... FEAR!



OH, WELL . NO USE WORRYING ABOUT IT! GOSH, IT'S A SWELL DAY! TOO NICE A DAY TO WORK! THINK I'LL TAKE A WALK!



SURE IS STRANGE! MUST HAVE BEEN DAYDREAMING! MY MIND WAS A MILLION MILES AWAY! BUT WHY, ON SUCH A LOVELY DAY, WOULD I DRAW SUCH A HORRIFIED FACE?



SOMETIME LATER...

... DOES A PERSON GOOD TO GET SOME CLEAN, FRESH AIR. . . SUNSHINE! I'VE WALKED A GOGO FIVE MILES AND I DON'T FEEL A BIT TIRED!



YES, SIR! NOTHING LIKE THE GREAT OUTDOORS! NATURE SURE IS WONDERFUL.. YOU DON'T HAVE TO BE AN ARTIST TO APPRECIATE IT! SAY... WHAT'S THAT NOISE?



SOUNDS LIKE SOMEONE BANGING... OR HAMMERING ON SOMETHING! OH OVER THERE. . . A HOUSE!



HMM... ALEX KORDOVA, GRAVE-  
STONES! NICE CHEERFUL  
OCCUPATION! SOUNDS LIKE  
THAT NOISE IS COMING FROM  
AROUND IN BACK!

CLANK! CLANK!

UNIQUE  
STONECUTTING  
GRAVESTONES

ALEX KORDOVA  
PROP.

YES, I WAS RIGHT! THERE HE IS  
WORKING ON A GRAVESTONE! THESE  
MUST BE SAMPLES OF HIS WORK!  
NICE DESIGN!

HE'S MAKING SO MUCH NOISE, HE DOESN'T  
KNOW I'M HERE! WELL, THE MAN KNOWS HIS  
STUFF. HE'S GOOD! WHAT'S HE WORKING  
ON NOW?

CLANK

HMM. LET'S SEE! HERE LIES  
THEODORE J. WARREN! ???  
WHY THAT'S MY NAME! "BORN  
APRIL 25, 1922." HOLY SMOKE!  
I WANT A CLOSER LOOK AT  
THAT GRAVESTONE!

"BORN APRIL 25, 1922  
DIED JUNE 9, 1950"

HEY!

BORN APRIL 25, 1922  
DIED JUNE 9, 1950



**GOOD LORD! THIS IS FANTASTIC! YOUR FACE! YOU ARE THE MAN I DREW! WHAT'S GOING ON? AM I DREAMING?**



**MAYBE SO, BUT YOU HAVE MY DATE OF DEATH AS JUNE 9, 1950! THAT'S THAT'S TODAY! AND THEN THERE'S THAT PICTURE I DREW.**



**THERE'S MORE TO THIS THAN JUST COINCIDENCE! I, I DON'T KNOW WHAT IT MEANS, BUT IT'S... IT'S LIKE AN OMEN OR SOMETHING!**



**THAT HEADSTONE! THAT'S MY NAME AND MY DATE OF BIRTH! WHAT MADE YOU PUT MY NAME AND BIRTH-DATE ON THAT THING?**



**HERE! LOOK AT THIS! IS THIS A DRAWING OF YOU, OR ISN'T IT?**



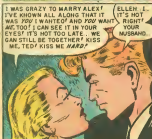
**THE ODDEST THING JUST HAPPENED, DEAR! I WAS**



**YOUR NAME? HMM. THAT'S QUITE A COINCIDENCE! BUT DON'T WORRY, MISTER. THIS IS JUST A SAMPLE I'M DOING! YOU KNOW, TO SHOW PEOPLE WHAT KIND OF WORK I DO!**

**WELL, I'LL BE DARNED! SURE IS ME. ALL RIGHT! YOU DIDN'T MAKE ME LOOK ANY TOO HAPPY, DID YOU?**















STRANGE

# TALES

★

## CRYPTO

FROM THE



# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S TALE

HAVE YOU EVER SEEN A "LIVING CORPSE"?  
DEAR READER? DO YOU BELIEVE THAT THE  
DEAD CAN BE REVIVED? THAT THEY CAN BE  
MADE TO LIVE ONCE AGAIN? THEN READ THIS  
STORY. ONE OF THE BEST OF MY TERROR-  
TALES THAT I KEEP HERE IN THE CRYPT! IT  
IS THE STORY OF JAMES COOPER...AND HOW  
HE CAME BACK FROM THE DEAD! I CALL IT...

## A SHOCKING WAY TO DIE!

© 1954



MY STORY BEGINS IN A COURTROOM, CROWDED WITH THE CROWDS WHO HAVE COME TO WATCH A CONVICTED MURDERER BE SENTENCED TO DEATH...  
AND IT IS THE JUDGMENT OF THIS COURT, JAMES COOPER, THAT YOU BE SENT TO STATE PRISON, AND THERE BE ELECTROCUTED ON THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 7TH...  
AND MAY THE LORD HAVE MERCY ON YOUR SOUL!

NO...  
NOT!



I'VE BEEN FRAMED! YOU'VE ALL AGAINST ME! BUT... I'LL GET EVEN! I'LL COME BACK... AND I'LL GET YOU! ALL OF YOU! I'LL HAVE REVENGE! YOU'LL SEE! I... LET'S GO, COOPER!



THE EVENING PAPERS CARRIED BLARING HEADLINES OF JAMES COOPER'S TRIAL...



BUT A FEW NIGHTS LATER, IN A RAMSHACKLED HOUSE, OUTSIDE OF TOWN...

FOR THE DEAD? WHAT? YOU CAN RAISE HIM FROM THE DEAD...REVIVE HIM AFTER HE HAS BEEN ELECTROCUTED?

WHAT? YOU CAN RAISE HIM FROM THE DEAD...REVIVE HIM AFTER HE HAS BEEN ELECTROCUTED?



THAT IS CORRECT! I HAVE BEEN EXPERIMENTING ON ELECTROCUTION DEATHS FOR MANY YEARS, AND HAVE BEEN SUCCESSFUL WITH ANIMALS! I HAVE LONGED TO EXPERIMENT ON A HUMAN... THAT IS WHY I'VE CONTACTED YOU!



AND SO... A FEW DAYS BEFORE JAMES COOPER WAS TO DIE IN THE ELECTRIC CHAIR... HE HAD A VISITOR IN THE DEATH HOUSE...



WHAT DO YOU THINK, JIMMY? WANT TO CHANGE IT?

OF COURSE, YOU FOOL! WHAT HAVE I GOT TO LOSE? PAY HIM HIS MONEY!

THE DEAL WAS MADE, AND ON THE NIGHT OF NOVEMBER 7TH, AT THE APPOINTED HOUR...



ALL RIGHT, COOPER! LET'S GO!

SURE, GUARD? SURE!

DOWN THE LONG CORRIDOR TO THE LITTLE GREEN DOOR, THE CONVICTED MAN... PLANNED BY THE WARDEN AND A GUARD... SLOWLY MADE HIS WAY...DOWN THE "LAST MILE."



THE HEAVY DOOR SWUNG OPEN! INSIDE, SAT REPORTERS ARRANGED TO COVER THE EXECUTION...



OUTSIDE THE DARK GREY WALLS, IN THE PRISON YARD, STOOD A BLACK HEARSE! A FACE! PEERED OUT FROM BEHIND SHOWN CURTAINS...



WHILE WITHIN, THE PRISONER WAS BEING STRAPPED INTO THE LETHAL CHAIR...



ELECTRODES WERE FASTENED INTO PLACE...

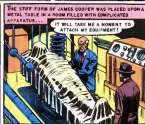


A SMALL MAN STEPPED TO A CONTROL PANEL AND PULLED A SWITCH...



THE STENCH OF BURNING FLESH AND BIRDSEAR FILLED THE ROOM AS THE LIGHTS DIMMED! AFTER A FEW MOMENTS, A DOCTOR STEPPED FORWARD AND PLACED HIS STETHOSCOPE ON JAMES COOPER'S HEART...







SLOWLY THE DRAPED FIGURE STIRRED... THEN SAT UP! THE SHEET FELL, WHAT ARE...





IT WAS TRUE! JAMES COOPER'S BURNED AND SEARED BODY DID LOOK WORSE! IT SEEMED TO BE... ~~NOT TRUE!~~

YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE DONE IT, JIMMY! THEY'VE TURNED THE MEAT ON...

WHO CARES? I'LL DEF THEM EVERY LAST ONE OF THEM!



AGAIN THAT NIGHT, JAMES COOPER STALKED A VICTIM...

THAT TAKES CARE OF YOU, JUROR NUMBER TWO!



AND THE PAPERS PLAYED IT UP...

## TAR NEWS

SECOND JUROR FOUND MURDERED

POLICE SEARCHING FOR A NEW KNOWN MEMBER OF COOPER GANG

COURTROOM PROMISE TO RETURN IS FULFILLED!

THE POLICE HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR A NEW KNOWN MEMBER OF COOPER GANG SINCE THE MURDER OF JUROR NUMBER TWO. THE SEARCH WAS FRUITLESS UNTIL THE COURTROOM PROMISE TO RETURN WAS FULFILLED. THE POLICE HAD BEEN SEARCHING FOR A NEW KNOWN MEMBER OF COOPER GANG SINCE THE MURDER OF JUROR NUMBER TWO. THE SEARCH WAS FRUITLESS UNTIL THE COURTROOM PROMISE TO RETURN WAS FULFILLED.

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RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! I'LL TALK... I'LL TALK! IT'S COOPER! HE'S ALIVE!

YOU'RE LYING!



FEAR? THEN WHY DON'T YOU LOOK IN HIS GRAVE FOR HIS BODY?

HOSEN! GET THE NECESSARY PAPERS! WE'LL TAKE THIS STODOLIE'S SUGGESTION!



BY COURT ORDER, THE GRAVE OF JAMES COOPER WAS OPENED...



IT... IT'S EMPTY! HE IS ALIVE!



IT CAN'T BE! I WOULDN'T BELIEVE IF I HADN'T SEEN IT WITH MY OWN EYES!

THAT NIGHT, JAMES COOPER AGAIN FOMOED THE CITY, BEING CAREFUL TO KEEP OUT OF SIGHT? HE WAS A CRAZY THING TO SEE! HIS FLESH HAD ALMOST COMPLETELY DECAYED FROM HIS BODY!

WHILE THE GOES ARE GUARDING THE JUDGE, I'LL GET THE JUDGE THAT SENTENCED ME...



HIS HORROROUS FACE PEERED INTO THE STUDY OF JUDGE WARREN HAWLEY...

GOOSE! HE'S ALONE!



SLOWLY HE OPENED THE FRENCH DOORS AND ENTERED...

COOPER? GOOD LORD? WHAT? WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE...

I... I'VE COME TO... TO KILL YOU, JUDGE!



THE JUDGE SNATCHED A FORK FROM THE NEARBY FIREPLACE... AND AS COOPER ADVANCED TOWARD HIM...

KEEP AWAY, COOPER... KEEP AWAY! ALL RIGHT! YOU FORCE ME TO...

YAAAAAH!



THE BLOW FROM THE HEAVY IRON FORK CAUGHT COOPER ACROSS THE FACE, AND THE REMAINING FLESH FELL AWAY... THEN...

HE... HE COLLAPSED INTO A HEAP OF BONES... AND DECAYED AWAY!



LATER, AFTER THE CORONER HAD EXAMINED COOPER'S REMAINS...

I DON'T KNOW WHAT TO MAKE OF IT, JUDGE! YOU SAY HE TALKED AND WALKED? ACCORDING TO MY TESTS, HE'S BEEN DEAD SINCE NOVEMBER 7TH!

DEAD? BUT, HE LIVED... I SAW HIM...



YES, JUDGE! COOPER LIVED! AT LEAST HE MOVED... AND TALKED! BUT HE WAS A LIVING CORPSE! AND HIS BODY CONTINUED TO DECAY, AS ALL DEAD BODIES DO! SOON, HE HAD DECAYED TO SUCH A POINT THAT EVEN THE 'LIFE' THAT THE POOR OLD PROFESSOR HAD GIVEN HIM SLIPPED AWAY! TOO BAD, THOUGH! HE WAS GOING TO LOOK REAL PRETTY! DIDN'T YOU THINK SO? WELL... FOR SOME SPINE-TINGLING TALK, READ ON...

IF YOU CAN'T JUST DON'T GO TO PHOENIX LIKE POOR OLD JIMMY!



THIS IS THE TALE OF TWO PEOPLE WHO VISITED AN AMUSEMENT PARK...AND WERE *NOT* AMUSED! I CALL IT...

# TERROR RIDE!



GEORGE AND RUTH HAD BEEN DRIVING FOR HOURS WHEN THEY SAW THE SIGN...

LOOK, GEORGE!  
AN AMUSEMENT  
PARK! LET'S  
STOP FOR A WHILE!

OKAY, RUTH!  
WE CAN TAKE IN  
SOME *ROBERT*



THE COOL, SEPTEMBER AIR STIRRED LAZILY AS THEY ENTERED THE SHADY GATES AND WALKED DOWN THE MOWAL...

OH, DEAR! THE  
ROLLER COASTER  
IS CLOSED UP!

LOOKS LIKE THE WHOLE  
PLACE IS BOARDED  
UP WITH THE *SEASONS*  
ONCE, YOU KNOW!



GEORGE AND RUTH STOOD ALONE  
ON THE DELETED MIDWAY...

SEE? I GUSS  
WE MIGHT AS  
WELL LEAVE!

YEAH!  
TOO BAD!

**SUDDENLY**

WHAT'S THAT,  
RUTH?

SOUNDS LIKE  
WATER  
SPLASHING!

OH LOOK,  
GEORGE!  
HOW QUANT!

AN OLD MILL  
RIDE... WITH A  
WATER-  
WHEEL!

I'M GLAD AT LEAST ~~ONE~~  
RIDE IS OPEN! LET'S  
TRY IT!

I... I DON'T KNOW, GEORGE!  
IT'S ALWAYS SO ~~DARK~~  
IN THOSE THINGS...

MMMM! WHAT BETTER  
PLACE TO TAKE MY  
~~NEW BRIDE~~ THAN ON A  
DARK BOAT RIDE!

OH, GEORGE!  
STOP!

HOW  
BANY, PLEASE?

TWO? AREN'T VERY  
BANY, ARE YOU?

NO! NOT MANY PEOPLE COME  
HERE THIS TIME OF YEAR!  
ALL RIGHT - TAKE THE NEXT  
BOAT!

COMFORTABLE,  
GOREY?

SHUS AS  
A SUG.

HAVE A PLEASRY!  
THP, FOLKS!

THE BOAT WITH GEORGE AND RUTH MOVED SLOWLY TOWARD THE TANKING BLACK MOUTH OF THE TUNNEL...

THIS LOOKS LIKE IT'S GOING TO BE *FUN*...

PLEASE, GEORGE? THE MAN WILL *NEAR* YOU...



AND THEN...

*CRASH!* IT'S DARK!

...THE DARKER THE *BETTER!*



YOU'RE *FRESH*, GEORGE. ARROLO?

DID YOU FORGET WHO YOU JUST *MARRIED* TODAY, MRS. ARROLO? NOW TAKE A...



SUDDENLY, A LIGHT FLASHED ON...

WHAT THE...?



OH, IT'S JUST ONE OF THOSE *WAX DISPLAYS* THEY HAVE IN THESE RIDES!

BUT... IT LOOKS... SO *REAL!*



THE BOAT MOVED SLOWLY FORWARD, AND THE DISPLAY DARKENED AGAIN...

THOSE *WAX FIGURES*, WHEN THEY'RE DONE BY AN EXPERT, ALWAYS *DO* LOOK *REAL!* NOW WHERE *WERE* WE?

YOU WERE ABOUT TO GIVE ME A...



HOW *HORRIBLE!*

*SAV!* THIS ISN'T *FUNNY* ANY MORE! THESE DISPLAYS ARE... *REPULSIVE!*







AS THE FRIGHTENED COUPLE  
SPLASHED THROUGH THE BLACK  
TUNNEL...

GREAT SCOTT! I JUST  
THOUGHT OF SOME-  
THING, RUTH!

BRIEF!



THAT CORPSE WAS  
REAL! MAYBE THE  
DISPLAYS WERE  
REAL TOO!

OH, NO...  
AND...



ON THROUGH THE BURNY DARKNESS  
THEY WAGED...

WE'LL BE  
OUT SOON!

I SAID... I'M  
TIRED! I'VE GOT  
TO REST,  
GEORGE!



HERE! HERE'S A  
PLACE TO SIT  
DOWN!

THANK GOODNESS!  
I'M ABOUT READY  
TO...



SUDDENLY, THE PLACE WHERE THEY HAVE STOPPED IS  
FLOODED WITH LIGHT...

IT'S ANOTHER  
DISPLAY...

IT IS REAL... BECAUSE...  
IT IS REAL!



FEAR AND TERROR CLUTCHED AT THEIR HEARTS AS  
GEORGE AND RUTH RUSHED FROM THE HORRIBLE  
SCENE FURTHER INTO THE DRY BLOOM...

HERE! HERE'S AN  
EMPTY DISPLAY!  
YOU CAN REST  
HERE!

IT LOOKS... LIKE  
SOME KIND OF  
TORTURE CHAMBER...



AS SOON AS YOU CATCH  
YOUR BREATH, WE'LL  
GET OUT OF HERE, RUTH!

THE OWNER... HE MUST  
BE A **BRILLIANT**! A  
HOMICIDAL MAMMOT...





FOO? DIDN'T LAUGH AT MY EXHIBITS...DID YOU?

GEORGE? IT'S HIM?

LOOK AT HIS EYES... HE IS MAD!



ALL SUMMER THEY LAUGHED AT MY EXHIBITS, THE FOOLS! THEY SAID MY WAX DUMMIES DIDN'T LOOK REAL! NOW I CAN SHOW THEM! HEH-HEH...

RUTH, GET READY TO MAKE A BOMB FOR ME!

NO MORE WILL THEY LAUGH! NOW MY EXHIBITS LOOK REAL! BECAUSE I USE REAL PEOPLE! AND THIS IS MY LAST DISPLAY, A MEDIEVAL FORTUNE CHAMBER! THANKS TO FOO FIND LIKE THE OTHERS WHO WANDERED INTO THE DESERTED AMUSEMENT PARK AND FOUND THIS RIDE...



...I WILL BE ABLE TO FINISH IT! THERE'S NO USE RUNNING...YOU CAN'T GET OUT! THE EXIT IS CLOSED...AND LOCKED!



RUN, RUTH! RUN!

KAH-KAH! I'LL GET YOU... NEVER FEAR...



THERE! BEEP...BEEP...HE'S CARRYING BEEP! HE WANTS TO PUT US ON THAT JETTER BEEP!BEEP!

GEORGE...HE'S COMING AFTER US...



THERE! GEORGE...THE END OF THE TUNNEL...

AND THE EXIT...IT IS LOCKED!



WE'RE... WE'RE  
TRAPPED!

MAYBE... IF I SCREAM  
FOR HELP!



THERE'S NO USE CALLING!  
NO ONE WILL HEAR YOU!  
THE PARK IS DESTROYED...

KEEP AWAY  
YOU CRAZY  
IDOT!



CRAZY? YOU'LL SEE  
IF I'M CRAZY...



THE MANIACAL OWNER, HIS EYES  
BURNING, LOOMED AT THE COWER-  
ING PAIR...

I'M A BEAST... I  
CREATE REALISTIC...



YAWN!

GEORGE? HE  
CLIPPED ON  
THE WET  
BOARDS...



DON'T LOOK,  
NUTH! DON'T  
LOOK!

HH!



WHAT A HORRIBLE END!  
GAMBIT IN THE WATER-WHEEL?

HIS OWN DIABOLICAL  
TRICK FINALLY  
DESTROYED HIM!  
COME, NUTH! LET'S  
BLAST THAT PROLOGUE AND  
GET AWAY FROM HERE!  
REMEMBER? WE'VE GOT A  
HOMETOWN TO FINISH!

THE  
END

IT WAS THE MOST UNUSUAL FRATERNITY INITIATION EVER SEEN ON THE CAMPUS. . . OR ON ANY OTHER CAMPUS, FOR THAT MATTER! THE THREE FLEDGEEES WERE TAKEN OUT TO THE OLD PALMER HOME ON THAT INFAMOUS NIGHT FIFTEEN YEARS AGO, AND INSTEAD OF THE PLACE BEING AMUSINGLY HAUNTED, IT TURNED INTO A—

# HOUSE OF HORROR



IT WAS ON A NIGHT IN 1934 THAT THIS STRANGE TALE HAD ITS BEGINNING! TODAY, FIFTEEN YEARS LATER, THERE IS STILL NO EXPLANATION FOR WHAT HAPPENED AT THE PALMER PLACE!



GET A LOAD OF LIPS WILTON BACK THERE... SCARING THE WITS OUT OF THOSE POOR FRESHMEN!



HE'S GONE ABOUT PREPARING THIS HOUSE FOR THE INITIATION AS IF IT WERE THE CLOSING SCENES OF THE 1934 GAME!

HE CLAIMS THAT EVEN IF IT WAS JUST AN OLD DUMP BEFORE... IT IS HAUNTED NOW!

...AND AS THE LAST STEP IN YOUR  
RADING, BOYS, YOU'LL HAVE TO  
PASS THE TEST OF COURAGE!  
A LONELY JOURNEY INTO THE  
OLD PALMER PLACE, WHICH  
LEGEND TELLS US IS  
HAUNTED!



EACH ONE OF YOU WILL FOLLOW  
THE INSTRUCTIONS I GAVE  
ON THE RIDE OUT HERE! IF  
ANYONE WANTS TO DROP  
OUT NOW, LET HIM SPEAK UP  
OR SHUT HIS MOUTH FOR-  
EVER! EVERYONE  
READY?



Y-YES, I-I GUESS  
SO.

HERE'S YOUR LIGHT, HENDERSON.  
YOU MIGHT AS WELL START THE  
GALL ROLLING! AND REST AS-  
SURED OF ONE THING, BOYS... THIS  
IS NO SCHOOLBOY PRANK, AS  
YOU'LL SOON LEARN!  
HEH, HEH!



WAVE THAT LANTERN AT US  
FROM THE FIRST AND SECOND  
LANDINGS, HENDERSON! AND  
JUST GOOE YOUR HEELS IN THE  
ATTIC TILL I COME UP FOR YOU!  
IF YOU'RE NOT ALREADY BATHED  
IN GOLD SWEAT, THAT IS!



YOU'RE DRIVING THESE FRESHMEN  
PRETTY HARD, LEE. YOU  
MUST HAVE GIVEN THIS  
PLACE QUITE A BUILD-  
UP, BECAUSE THEY  
LOOKED SCARED TO  
DEATH! FROM THE  
LOOK IN HENDERSON'S  
EYE, HE'D KILL YOU  
IN A MINUTE IF HE  
HAD THE CHANCE!



T-THERE HE  
IS NOW  
WAVING THAT  
LANTERN  
AT THE FIRST  
FLOOR WINDOW!

NOW THE FUN  
STARTS! I WENT  
THROUGH THAT  
PLACE LAST  
WEEK, RIGGED  
A FEW CON-  
TRAPTIONS FOR  
THE BOYS TO  
TRIP OVER!  
DOUGHT TO BE GOOD  
FOR SOME LAUGHS  
BEFORE THE EVE-  
NING'S OVER!



THERE HE IS AGAIN!  
POOR KID MUST  
HAVE RAN ALL THE  
WAY UP TO THE  
SECOND FLOOR! AS  
IF THERE WAS A  
GHOST BEHIND 'EM!





THERE MAY BE MORE THAN GHOSTS BEHIND 'EM BOYS. HEH, HEH!

ONE OF 'EM MAY HAVE GOTTEN HENDERSON THEN 'CAUSE IT'S BEEN SEVERAL MINUTES SINCE WE SAW HIM AT THE SECOND FLOOR... AND IT DOESN'T TAKE THAT LONG TO GET UP TO THE ATTIC!



JUST A BORN PRANK, THAT'S ALL! THINKS HE'LL TURN THE TABLES AND SCARE US A BIT! PROBABLY SITTING UP THERE IN THE ATTIC, WAITING TO JUMP OUT AND TELL BOB AT ME WHEN I COME UP TO RELIEVE HIM!

SO WE'LL HAVE A LITTLE CHANGE OF PLANS. TO MEET THE EMERGEN CYE INSTEAD OF LES WILTON GOING UP THERE. WE'LL PICK THE SECOND FLEDGEE! HEY, WATERS!



M-METTY-Yeah, BE RIGHT THERE!

I DON'T KNOW HOW HE DID IT... BUT WILTON'S GOT THESE FRESH-MON SHAKES IN THEIR BOOTS! NO-GUT SHOULD NORMALLY TREM BLE AT THE THOUGHT OF ASSAULTED HOUSE... UNLESS HE THOUGHT THERE WAS DIRTY WORK AFOOT!



HMM... MORE THERE IS?

HEH HEH! LOOK AT HIS FACE, WILL YOU! IMAGINE THAT... A GROWN MAN, SHAKING LIKE A TEEN-AGE GAIL GOING PAST A GRAVEYARD!



I'M BE-GIMMING TO THINK THAT I WOULDN'T LIKE THIS SET-UP MYSELF!

WHAT IN THE WORLD DID YOU DO TO THAT HOUSE, WILTON? THESE BOYS HAVE A LOOK OF ABSOLUTE SPREAD ON THEIR FACES!



AH, IT'S NOTHING! JUST A COUPLE LOOSE STEPS... A FEW CORNERS... SOME SOLIDARY DOORS!

LET'S HAPPENED AGAIN! WATERS NEVER REACHED THAT ATTIC WINDOW! I DON'T LIKE THE LOOKS OF THIS...



AH, THEY PROBABLY TURNED RIGHT AROUND FROM THE SECOND FLOOR... AN WE'LL FIND 'EM HIDING NEAR THE FRONT DOOR! IF THESE GUYS HAVEN'T THE GUTS TO GO UP THERE... THEN THEY'RE NOT FIT TO BE GAMMA DELTAS!



YOU ARLING? C'MON OVER HERE!  
YOU'RE NEXT, MAN... GO UP TO THAT  
ATTIC AND TELL THOSE PALS OF  
YOURS TO STOP THEIR MONKEY-  
SHINES! THIS IS A PRATERNITY  
INITIATION... NOT A SCHOOLBOY  
PRANK!



I-I DON'T  
THINK I...  
I G... GAVE  
TO GO!



YOU'LL GO ALL RIGHT,  
OR THE Y'LL FIND YOU  
IN A DITCH! I DIDN'T  
RIS UP THIS PLACE  
JUST TO HAVE A  
COUPLA PUNKS SPOL  
OUR FUN! IF THE  
THREE OF YOU ARE  
PLANNING TO GIVE  
ME A SCARE, YOU'LL  
REGRET IT!

W... WE DIDN'T PLAN ANY JOKES  
LIKE T... THAT! AND I DON'T LIKE  
THE LOOKS OF THIS... IT'S IN  
NOT LIKE WATERS AND HENDER-  
SON TO FOOL AROUND! B... BUT  
I'LL GO!



SPOKE LIKE A  
REAL GAMMA  
DELTA TO BE!

HUH, HUH? LOOK AT 'EM SHAKING!  
BET THE OTHER TWO'LL HAVE  
A BIG SURPRISE FOR ARLING.  
THINKING IT'S THEIR BELOVED  
LES WILTON!

MAYBE THE  
KID'S RIGHT, LES.  
MAYBE SOME-  
THING WAS SO  
WRONG UP  
THERE!



BUTS! NOTHING'S WRONG UP  
THERE... ARLING'S AT THE FIRST  
FLOOR SAFE AND SOUND! FROM  
THE LOOK ON HIS FACE HE MUST  
HAVE STUMLED OVER THAT  
SKELETON I BORROWED FROM  
THE LAB, TOO!



HE'S AT THE... ON HIS WAY TO THE  
SECOND... ATTIC! HOLD YOUR  
BREATH, BOYS...  
HERE'S WHERE THE  
REAL FUN BEGINS...  
IN THE NEXT SIXTY  
SECONDS.



FIVE MINUTES,  
WILTON... AND  
NO SIGN OF  
ARLING! ALL  
THREE OF 'EM  
GONE!

THE STUPID PUNKS... TOO YELLOW TO  
TAKE THAT LAST FLIGHT OF STEPS!  
I'LL SHOW 'EM REAL FEAR...



SIMPLE THAT LIGHT, JENKINS. I'LL GO UP THERE MYSELF FIRST TO PROVE TO ALL OF YOU THAT THERE'S NO DANGER UP THERE AND SECOND, TO KICK THOSE GUYS OUT OF THAT PLACE. AND OUT OF THE GAMMA DELTA!



MAYBE WE SHOULDN'T HAVE LET WILTON PLAN THIS WHOLE INITIATION BY HIMSELF? HE'S LIKELY TO GO OVERBOARD ON THIS HAZING BUSINESS. THE BOYS IN THAT HOUSE MAY HAVE HUNT THEMSELVES!

FOR ALL WE KNOW HE MIGHT HAVE STUCK SOME RATTLESNAKES IN THE OLD DUMPF



I TOLD YOU I DIDN'T LIKE THIS WHOLE SET-UP! THE WINDOW... IT'S BEEN SMASHED!

I... IT'S WILTON!

THOUGHT I'D INJECT A LITTLE EXCITEMENT INTO THIS INITIATION. DO I LOOK ANY THE WORSE FOR WEARS?



NOTHING TO WORRY ABOUT HERE ON THE SECOND FLOOR EITHER



FIFTEEN MINUTES SINCE WE SAW WILTON!

IS THERE AS SOMETHING WRONG UP THERE?

THE SECONDS TICKED BY IN THAT LONELY AREA KNOWN AS RALLIER'S PLACE. SECONDS BECAME MINUTES... AND THE MINUTES STRETCHED INTERMINABLY.



SOMETHING'S GOING ON IN THAT HOUSE THAT WE DON'T KNOW ABOUT! AND THE WAY THOSE THREE FRESHMAN HATED WILTON... THEY MAY HAVE GIVEN HIM A BAD BEATING!

I... I HOPE IT'S ONLY FAKE! LET'S HURRY!





WE'LL COMB THIS PLACE UNTIL WE FIND ALL FOUR OF 'EM! MINE. FRED SEARCH EACH ROOM WITH A FINE-TOOTH COMB! WE'LL SET THIS THING STRAIGHTENED OUT IF IT TAKES THE REST OF THE NIGHT!

NOT A TRACE OF ANY-ONE IN THE FRONT ROOM

OR ANY OF THE OTHERS EITHER? THE QUIET WASN'T EVEN DISTURBED!

AND OUTSIDE, NO FOOT-PRINTS! WHICH MEANS THEY'RE ALL STILL IN THE HOUSE!

NO ONE ON THE SECOND FLOOR EITHER? AND SINCE NO ONE COULD HAVE LEFT THE HOUSE... THEY MUST ALL BE UP THERE!

T. THE ATTIC?

T. THIS IS PROBABLY WILTON'S IDEA OF A JOKE. HAZING THE WHOLE BUNCH OF US? W. WELL... HERE GOES!

T. THE DOOR, IT OPENS EASILY! AS IF SOME-ONE ELSE OPENED IT BEFORE WE'D... OH!

G-G-GOOD HEAVENS!

I... IT'S WILTON! H... HE'S AGED FIFTY YEARS IN THE LAST FEW MINUTES. H... HIS HAIR... IT'S TURNED WHITE!

H... HE LOOKS AS IF HE'S GONE INSANE! LISTEN TO HIS MOANING!

NEVER SEEN ANYTHING LIKE THIS... NEVER EVEN HEARD OF ITS EQUAL! THAT WILTON! NO CAN'T GET A COHERENT WORD OUT OF HIM! HIS MIND... IT'S CRACKED... HE'S COMPLETELY INSANE! AND THE OTHERS... VANISHED!

AGAIN AND AGAIN THE POLICE SEARCHED THE BUILDING THE NEXT FEW DAYS BUT NO FURTHER INFORMATION WAS UNCOVERED...

...AND THEN ABOUT A WEEK AFTER THE NIGHT OF HORROR

THERE SHE GOES... CONSUMED TO FLAMES BY THE COUNTY COMMISSIONER! AND WITH IT... THE LAST TRACE OF WHAT HAPPENED TO ARLING, WATERS AND HENDERSON!

FIFTEEN YEARS AGO IT HAPPENED AND NO EXPLANATION HAS ~~EVER~~ BEEN FOUND AS TO THE DISAPPEARANCE OF THE THREE FRESHMEN. OR WHAT AWFUL HORRORS LET WILTON SAW IN THE MOMENTS BEFORE HIS MIND CRUMBLLED!

WITHIN HALF-AN-HOUR THE POLICE HAD ARRIVED AT PALMER'S PLACE... AND A THOROUGH SEARCH OF THE PREMISES REVEALED ONE STARTLING FACT

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



MY STORY BEGINS ON A BLACK NIGHT IN A DESERTED GRAVEYARD! THE SOUND OF DIGGING SHATTERS THE DEAD SILENCE.



WELCH, THE DARK FIGURE BARGES THE SOFT EARTH, OPENING THE EVER-WIDENING BLACK HOLE...





WHAT DOES THIS STRANGE FELLOW WHO DIES AT GRAVES IN THE BLADE OF NIGHT WANT WITH BARTER'S TUXEDO, YOU ASK? LET ME TELL YOU HIS STORY WHILE HE LIVES!



HIS NAME IS LAWRENCE CABOTT WE HAVE TO GO BACK INTO THE PAST... TO LAWRENCE CABOTT'S COLLEGE DAYS... TO PICK UP HIS STORY!

HEY, CABOTT? I HEAR YOU AND JOHN BARTER ARE BOTH NOT ORIGINALLY ANDERSON!

CUT IT OUT, WILL YOU, DAVE?



YOU'RE GOING HAVE TO GO SOME TO GET ~~HER~~ LARRY! BARTER'S OLD MAN'S GOT DOWN, YOU KNOW?

THAT'S JUST MY TROUBLE! I CAN'T AFFORD TO TAKE HER OUT LIKE JOHN DOES!



THAT'S THE WAY IT WAS! JOHN BARTER AND LAWRENCE CABOTT WERE BOTH IN LOVE WITH THE SAME GIRL! JOHN WAS RICH... WHILE LARRY JUST MANAGED TO SCRAPE UP ENOUGH TO GET THROUGH COLLEGE...

ALL'S FAIR IN LOVE AND WAR, LARRY, ISN'T IT?

SURE, JOHNNY BART!



AND THEN THAT FATEFUL DAY ARRIVED! THE FRATERNITY THAT JOHN AND LARRY BELONGED TO WAS INVITED TO A GRADUATION DANCE, GIVEN BY MARY ANDERSON'S SOCIETY...

...AND IT'S **STRICTLY FORMAL**, YOU GUYS! ROBERT DOES WITHOUT A FIOFF!

WHA...?

IT MATTER LARRY! CAN'T YOU AFFORD ONE?



IT WAS A BAD BREAK FOR LARRY! JOHN ~~HAD~~ TUXEDO, AND SO HE WENT TO THAT DANCE... WHILE LARRY STAYED BEHIND...

GARNETT! JUST MY LUCK! JOHNNY'LL PROBABLY MAKE TIME WITH NANCY TONIGHT!



BUT WHEN THE BOYS RETURNED LATE THAT NIGHT...

HEY, LARRY! CONGRATULATE ME! NANCY AND I ARE **ENGAGED**! WE'RE GOING TO BE MARRIED RIGHT AFTER GRADUATION!

I... I... I SEE!

IF IT WASN'T FOR THAT DAMNED FALLOUT OF YOUNG,  
JOHN BAXTER, NANCY ANDERSON WOULD HAVE BEEN  
MY WIFE!



BUT...WHAT HAPPENED AFTER THAT, YOU ASK? LET ME  
CONTINUE! JOHN AND NANCY WERE MARRIED!



NANCY'S FATHER GAVE JOHN A GOOD  
POSITION IN HIS FIRM, AND JOHN WAS  
SET...



WHILE IN HIS SMALL OFFICE LARRY  
STRUGGLED TO MAKE ENDS MEET...



...AND BROODS...

FOR HE IS JOHN'S SHOE TOE!  
FOR HE HAS EVERYTHING THAT  
HE HAS...



...AND THEN HE MADE HIS DECISION...

BUT I CAN HAVE NANCY... JOHN'S JOB... MONEY...  
PRESTIGE! I'LL TAKE THEM FROM HIM! THEY  
SHOULD BE MINE, ANYWAY! I'LL KILL HIM!



LARRY GREAT PLANNED IT VERY CAREFULLY...EVERY  
DETAIL! ONE NIGHT, ON A LONELY ROAD...



LARRY! I THOUGHT YOU WERE  
SUPPOSED TO BE AT THE  
HOUSE FOR DINNER! WHAT  
ARE YOU DOING OUT HERE?

MY CAR BROKE DOWN,  
JOHN! I'VE BEEN  
WAITING FOR YOU TO  
COME ALONG!

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, LARRY! NANCY WILL BE THRILLED!

YES! SHE'LL PROBABLY GET THE BRIDE OF HER LIFE!



AS HE STRUGGLED JOHN, LARRY GRABBED THE WHEEL AND GUIDED THE CAR TO A STOP! THEN HE DROVE TO A POINT WHERE THE ROAD SKIRTED A MOUNTAINCLIFF...

THIS IS PERFECT!



PROPPING THE UNCONSCIOUS FIGURE OF JOHN BEHIND THE WHEEL, LARRY RELEASED THE BRAKE ON THE CAR AND LET IT ROLL TOWARD THE CLIFF EDGE! THEN...



THEY CALLED IT AN ACCIDENT! LARRY'S PLAN HAD WORKED PERFECTLY! AT THE FUNERAL, HE COMFORTED THE GRIEF-STROCKEN NANCY...

OH, MY NANCY! HE WOULD SOON HAVE WANTED OUT THAT MAN, SON... SON...



THE MONTHS PASSED, AND LARRY HENCE CANNOT CARE TO CALL MORE AND MORE OFTEN AT THE HOME OF THE YOUNG WIDOW, NANCY BASTER...

YOU'VE GOT YOUR WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF YOU, NANCY! YOU CAN'T THROW IT AWAY!

I SUPPOSE YOU'RE RIGHT, LARRY!



AND THEN... ONE EVENING...

NANCY! YOU KNOW HOW I'VE FELT ABOUT YOU... EVER SINCE COLLEGE!

YOU'RE SWEET, LARRY!





AND THAT IS LAWRENCE  
CARBY'S STORY... SO PAUP  
BUT? HEAR THAT MELLOW  
BOOM? THE GORFFIN! LET'S  
SEE WHAT HE'S UP TO...



AGH! NOW TO OPEN YOUR  
CASKET AND STEAL YOU OF  
YOUR LAST POSSESSION.  
JOHN BAXTER!



H-H-H-H! FOUR MONTHS IN THE GROUND  
HASN'T HARMED IT ANY! IT'S STILL  
IN GOOD CONDITION!



LARRY CARBY REMOVED THE FLOTTING FROM THE  
CORPSE OF JOHN BAXTER AND RE-COVERED THE  
GRAVE! THEN...



...AND NOW FOR SOME SLEEP! TOMORROW  
IS A BIG DAY!

YOU THINK HE'S MAD, DON'T YOU WELL, YOU MAY BE RIGHT!  
IN ANY CASE, THE NEXT MORNING LARRY DRESSED IN JOHN'S  
TUXEDO...



YES, JOHN! IT FITS. FINALLY FIT INTO EVERYTHING  
OF YOURS. FINE! AH-HA!

THE CHURCH WAS HOT! AND AS LARRY STOOD IN THE  
VESTRY, WAITING FOR THE CEREMONY TO BEGIN...



WHERE! IT'S CERTAINLY HOT IN HERE THIS  
MORNING! I... I... FEEL... STRANGE...

SOON THE FAMILIAR STRAINS OF THE WEDDING MARCH  
EDGED THROUGH THE VAULTED ROOM...



IT... MUST BE MY IMAGINATION... BUT I FEEL...  
AS THOUGH... THIS JOY... WERE GROOMING ME!

NANCY MADE HER APPEARANCE AND STARTED DOWN THE LONG AISLE...



H. HURRY! I.I. CAN'T BREATHE!  
I.I. I DON'T...THINK I CAN...LAST  
THROUGH...THE...CEREMONY!

LARRY'S BRAIN WAS REELING! EVERYTHING SWAM BEFORE HIM! AS HE STEPPED FORWARD...



CRUSHING...THE LIFE OUT OF  
ME...NOT...CAN'T BREATHE?

WE ARE GATHERED  
TOGETHER TO  
WITNESS THE...

THEM WERE PLANNED, NOW... THEN A DECREE...



...LET HIM SPEAK NOW,  
OR FOREVER HOLD  
HIS PEACE...

JOHN... HE... HE'S  
CRUSHING ME... KILLING  
ME! I...!

IN A LAST MAD FIT, BEFORE THE BLACKNESS CLOSED IN, LARRY TOOK JOHN'S TUXEDO FROM HIMSELF...



YAAAAA AAAAH!

LARRY... I NOW  
PROCLAIM  
YOU... WHAT

THE GROUP THAT HAD COME TO WITNESS THE WEDDING WAS SHOCKED SOMEONE RUSHED FORWARD TO EXAMINE THE PROSTRATE LARRY...



HE... HE'S DEAD? DEAD?

YES! HE WAS DEAD! AFTER A MEDICAL EXAMINATION WAS MADE...

STRANGE! THIS REPORT SAYS THAT LARRY DIED OF POISONING FROM EMBALMING FLUID!

EMBALMING FLUID? BUT HOW DO LARRY EVER COME IN CONTACT WITH THAT?



YES, BUT WE KNOW NOW, DON'T WE, DEAR READERS? WHEN LARRY GOT HIT UNDER THE COLLAR, HIS BODY ABSORBED THE EMBALMING FLUID WHICH HAD CONTAMINATED JOHN'S TUXEDO! AND NOW, LARRY REALLY HAS EVERYTHING THAT JOHN HAD! NO NANCY... NO JOB... NO PRESTIGE... NO NOTHING! JUST A BIG, COOL COFFIN IN A BIG, COOL GRAVE!





**TERROR**

**EC**  
NO. 22  
FEB.-MAR.  
1964

# TALES

FROM THE

10¢

# CRYPT

RM

**FEATURING**



**THE KEEPER OF  
THE CRYPT OF  
TERROR!**



**THE KEEPER OF  
THE VAULT OF  
HORROR!**



**THE OLD WITCH  
FROM THE  
HAUNT OF  
FEAR!**



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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR



HEH, HEH! WELL! SO WE MEET AGAIN, DEAR FRIENDS! WELCOME! WELCOME! ONCE MORE TO THE *CRYPT OF TERROR*! THIS TIME I HAVE A REALLY CHILLING TALE FROM MY COLLECTION OF SPINE-TINGLERS TO RELATE TO YOU! NOW, LIE BACK IN YOUR CASKETS! TUCK YOURSELVES IN WITH YOUR SHROUDS! COMFY! GOOD! THEN I'LL BEGIN! I CALL THIS STORY...

## THE THING FROM THE GRAVE!



JAMES BARRY AND WILLIAM FENTH WERE BOTH IN LOVE WITH THE SAME GIRL, LAURA. HADN'T JIM HAD ENOUGH CONSIDERATE... A GENTLEMAN? BILL WAS BRAGGART... FOR-LOVING. AND AT TIMES, LAURA WAS ALMOST AFRAID OF HIM! AND SO WHEN JIM ASKED THE INEVITABLE QUESTION...



HARRY McLAUREN? I KNOW I CAN MAKE YOU HAPPY!



BUT, JIM? WHAT ABOUT BILL? ...I'M AFRAID OF WHAT HE'LL DO WHEN HE FINDS OUT!

DON'T WORRY, LAURA! BILL WILL HAVE TO TAKE IT LIKE A MAN! ALL'S FISH IN LOVE AND WAR, Y'KNOW!



YES? BUT BILL ISN'T THE TYPE TO GIVE UP EASILY!

LAURA DIDN'T KNOW HOW RIGHT SHE WAS WHEN SHE SPOKE THOSE WORDS! YES! BILL HAS NOT THE TYPE TO GIVE UP EASILY! HE WANTED LAURA!



...AND I'LL HAVE HER, TOO! EVEN IF I HAVE TO KILL YOU, JAMES BARRY!

SOON, LAURA AND JIM WERE MARRIED! THEY WERE VERY HAPPY THOSE FIRST FEW WEEKS... BUT THEN, BUSINESS CALLED JIM OUT OF TOWN FOR A FEW DAYS...



I'LL BE BACK THURSDAY NIGHT, DEAREST!

OH, JIM! I'M AFRAID! I DON'T WANT TO BE LEFT ALONE! BILL NIGHT...

BILL WON'T DO ANYTHING TO YOU, LAURA! BUT, IF YOU EVER ARE IN DANGER, NO MATTER WHERE I AM, SOMEHOW, I'LL GET TO YOU... AND SAVE YOU!



YOU'RE JOING WITH ME, JAMES BARRY!... BUT I'VE BEEN SERIOUS!

SO HAVE I, LAURA! SO HAVE I! BYE!



BYE, JIM! HURRY BACK!

JIM'S CAR SPED ALONG A DARK COUNTRY ROAD TOWARDS THE MAJOR HIGHWAY! THE HEADLIGHTS, BURNING THROUGH THE VELVETY BLACKNESS, SUDDENLY FELL UPON...



A *MAN!* STANDING IN THE ROAD...



JIM PRESSED HARD ON HIS BRAKES AND THE CAR SCREECHED TO A STOP.



"CRAZY FOOL? I COULD HAVE KILLED YOU! WHO ARE YOU... ANYWAY?"

"BILL! IT'S ME... BILL!"

THE SHADY FIGURE MOVED TOWARDS THE CAR... AND AS HE PASSED THE HEADLIGHT, A GLINT OF SHINY STEEL CAUGHT JIM'S EYE...



"HE... HE'S GOT A KNIFE! HE'S... GONNA TO KILL ME!"

THE SOUND OF A SPADOLE SHATTERED THE SILENCE, RANGING OVER THE DESERTED ROAD AND THE HEAVY WOODS FLANKING IT! THEN THERE WAS A THUD AND A PLEASING SMILE...



"...AND NOW, LADDA WILL BE MINE! ALL MINE!"

BILL FORTH PICKED UP THE BODY OF THE MURDERED JAMES BARTY AND DROPPED IT INTO THE WOODS...



"...GOT TO GET RID OF THE BODY SO NO ONE WILL EVER FIND IT! GOT TO BURY IT DEEP IN THESE WOODS!"

AGAIN THE THICK SILENCE OF THE WOODS WAS BROKEN! THIS TIME BY THE SOUND OF A SPADE STRIKING THE SOFT EARTH BELOW TOWERING TREES...



"SORRY TO GIVE YOU SUCH A CRUDE BURIAL, JIM OL' BOY, BUT IT'S THE BEST I CAN DO UNDER THE CIRCUMSTANCES!"

SOON, A DEEPING HOLE WAS OPENED AND THE STIFF BODY OF JAMES BARRY WAS DROPPED INTO IT...

HOW TO COVER IT UP, CATCH THE CAR, AND GET BACK HOME? THEN ALL I DO IS WAIT! IF I PLAY MY CARDS RIGHT, SHE'LL BE *MINE*!



AND SO THE JOB WAS DONE! BILL FERTH HAD PLANNED EVERYTHING CAREFULLY! THE WEEKS WENT BY, AND THEN THE TIME CAME FOR HIM TO GO AND SEE LAURA...



HE'LL NEVER COME BACK! NEVER!



THEN I'LL WAIT FOR HIM *FOREVER*! I'LL NEVER STOP LOVING HIM, BILL! I'M *NOT* HIS LIFE! WITHOUT HIM...

A LITTLE LATER, THE SLICK FORM OF JAMES BARRY'S AUTOMOBILE MIGHT SCOUR A CLIFF INTO A DEEP LAKE...

THEY'LL NEVER FIND THE CAR! IT'LL SINK INTO THE MUD AT THE BOTTOM OF THE LAKE!



YES, LAURA! BUT IT'S OVER A MONTH NOW! HE'S LEFT YOU! HE'S PROBABLY FOUND ANOTHER WOMAN!



I CAN'T BELIEVE THAT, BILL! SOMETHING'S HAPPENED TO HIM! I KNOW IT! I FEEL IT!

BILL COULDN'T WAIT! HE HAD PLENTY OF TIME! SHE'D COME AROUND! HE WAS SURE! AFTER ANOTHER MONTH...

IF ANYTHING HAD HAPPENED TO HIM, YOU WOULD HAVE KNOWN BY NOW, LAURA! CAN'T YOU SEE? HE'S LEFT YOU... *DESERVED* YOU!



I'LL WAIT FOR HIM... TO COME BACK!

THEN... IT'S ALL WASTED! THE PLANNING... THE WORK... THE WAITING... *WASTED!*



WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHAT ARE YOU SAYING?



JUST I **KILLED** HIM! HE'S DEAD!  
I WANTED YOU, LAURA, AND HE  
STOOD IN MY WAY!

**IF YOU KILLED  
JIM? I HATE  
YOU... YOU... YOU  
MURDER! HATE  
YOU... HATE...**



NOW... I'VE GOT TO **KILL YOU**, LAURA! IF  
I CAN'T HAVE YOU, NO ONE **ELSE** WILL  
EITHER! I'LL HAVE SOME OF THAT!

YOU... YOU'RE  
**MAD...  
A RAVING  
MADMAN!**



**BILL FORTH FORCED LAURA INTO HIS CAR  
AND DROVE HER TO A DESERTED GARIN...  
DEEP IN THE WOODS NEAR WHERE HE HAD  
KILLED JIM...**

THIS ROOM HAS NO WINDOWS... SO  
WHEN I LOCK YOU IN, YOU WON'T BE  
ABLE TO ESCAPE!

W... WHAT ARE  
YOU GOING TO DO  
TO ME?



I'M GOING TO SET FIRE TO THE CUBES! THEY'LL  
NEVER FIND WHAT'S LEFT OF YOU... **NEVER!**  
IT'LL BE ASHES... ALL ASHES!



FACED WITH THE HORROR OF BEING  
BURNED ALIVE BY THIS MADMAN,  
LAURA SCREAMED FOR HELP...



IT WAS AN EAR-SPLITTING SCREAM  
THAT SHOT THROUGH THE WOODS,  
REVERBERATING FROM TREE TO TREE  
... ROCK TO ROCK...



AND SOMEWHERE OUT THERE, UNDER  
THE SOFT EARTH THAT COVERED IT...  
SOMETHING STIRRED... THEN PUSHED  
ITS BEARDED AND FOTTED HAND UP...  
UP... THROUGH THE BLACK DIRT INTO  
THE BLACK NIGHT...

**EEEEEEAAGGHH**

SLOWLY, THE EARTH SANK WAS, AS THE TRIND...  
PUSHED UPWARD, CLAVING! THE OCEAN FRESH AIR  
SEEPED DOWN INTO ITS SHALLOW GRAVE...



BACK AT THE CABIN, BILL FOURED THE CAN OF  
KODOLINE AROUND THE OUTSIDE WALLS...



GO AHEAD... SCREAM, YOU  
FOOL! NO ONE WILL HEAR  
YOU!

THE CABIN WAS ON FIRE NOW! INSIDE LAURA  
CRINGED AGAINST THE DOOR AS THE FLAMES  
LICKED AT HER... WHITE... HOT...



OH... SAVE ME, JIM!  
WHEREVER YOU ARE...  
YOU PROMISED...  
*obaby!*

IT WASN'T THE FEEL  
CLUMSY... STOOD ERECT  
IN THE MOONLIGHT! IT  
LIFTED ITS HEAD...  
LISTENING! IT HAD HEARD  
A SCREAM... A SCREAM  
THAT HAD MADE IT BECK  
THE OPEN AIR...



IT MOVED FORWARD AT A SPIN-  
NING GATE! ITS HOTTER LEGS... ITS  
SIGHTLESS EYES... THE O CLOVED  
FLESH THAT CLUNG HERE AND  
THERE TO WHITERED BONE... MOVED  
THROUGH THE UNDERBUSH...



OUT IN THE DEEP READER OF THE WOODS, THE TRIND...  
HEARD THE SCREAM... AND STUMBLED FORWARD... TOWARDS IT



OUTSIDE, BILL WATCHED AS THE FLAMES LEAPED HIGHER AND  
HIGHER! THEN, FROM THE PRINGS OF THE TREES, HE SAW THE  
THING COMING... STUMBLING... STAGGERING...



GOOD LORD!



THE THING DID NOT SEE BILL! IT WAS LOOKING AT THE BURNING CABIN! BILL PUT HIS HAND OVER HIS MOUTH! HE WAS SHOCK! HE WHIMPERED...



THE THING WENT INTO THE FLAME! IT DID NOT FEEL THE FLAMES LICKING AT ITS TATTERED CLOTHES... ITS ROTTER FLESH! IT WAS DEAD! IT COULD FEEL NOTHING...



AFTER A FEW MOMENTS IT CAME OUT! ITS HAIR WAS BROWN! ITS DECAYED FLESH WAS CHARRED! WHERE THE FIRE HAD TOUCHED THE BONE, IT WAS BLACK AND SCORCHED! IT CARRIED THE GIRL...



BILL WAS SCREAMING NOW! HE BEGAN TO RUN WILDLY INTO THE WOODS... SCREAMING... SCREAMING...



THE THING PUT LAURA DOWN ON THE COOL GRASS FAR FROM THE BURNING CABIN! SHE WAS UNCONSCIOUS! SHE HAD FAINTED BEFORE THE THING HAD REACHED HERE! SHE HAD NOT SEEN IT...



THEN THE THING TURNED... TOWARDS THE HYSTERICAL SHRIEKING THAT CAME FROM THE NEARBY WOODS...



SLOWLY IT SHAMBLED TOWARDS THE SCREAMING BILL AS HE CRASHED MADLY THROUGH THE THICK UNDERGROWTH...



SUDDENLY BILL STUMBLED INTO A THINNING BLACK HOLE.



GOOD GOD! HIS GRAVE?  
JIM'S GRAVE... WHERE?  
SAVED HIM?

THE THING WAS COMING, NOW! BILL TRIED TO STAND BUT HE COULDN'T! THE FRANTIC HE HAD BROKEN HIS LEG! HE TRIED TO DRAG HIMSELF FROM THE SHALLOW PIT... BUT THEN...



NO... NO!

THE THING WAS ON TOP OF HIM, PINNING HIM DOWN! HE TRIED TO STRUGGLE, BUT THE THING WAS STRONG! IT HELD HIM EASILY...



LET ME GO! LET  
ME GO! YOU'RE  
DEAD! DEAD!

AND THEN THE THING BEGAN, WITH ONE DOTTED AND DECAYED HAND, TO FILL THE GRAVE AGAIN...



NO... NO! YOU CAN'T  
DIE! ME! I'M ALIVE...  
ALIVE!

IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG TO FILL THE GRAVE! THE DIRT WAS GETTING TO BILL'S EYES... HIS MOUTH! HIS SCREAMING WAS WILDER NOW... HYSTERICAL, MAD, TERRIFIED SCREAMING...



AND THEN, AFTER A WHILE... THE SCREAMING STOPPED...



AND THAT'S MY STORY, DEAR PLEASER JIM CERTAINLY KEPT HIS PROMISE TO LAURA, DIDN'T HE? LOOKER FOR HER THE PAINTED BEFORE HE GOT THERE, THOUGHT! SHE'LL ALWAYS REMEMBER HIM IN A NICE WAY, NOW, AND POOR BILL! NOW JIM'S GOT HIM FOR COMPANY... DOWN THERE WHERE IT'S COLD AND DARK! WELL, THEY CAN ALWAYS HOLD GRAVE CONVERSATIONS TOGETHER! HEH, HEH! NOW, IF YOU'RE NOT TOO BROKEN UP OVER THIS TALE... WHY NOT READ ON! MORE CHILLS AWAIT YOU!



SO YOU ALL LIKE VAMPIRE STORIES, EH? WELL, THIS ONE WILL CURDLE YOUR BLOOD! I CALL IT...

# BLOOD TYPE V!



AS MY STORY OPENS, A SLEEK BLACK CONVERTIBLE STRIDES ALONG A DESERTED HIGHWAY LATE ONE DARK MOONLIT NIGHT...

PLEASE, FREDDIE? DRIVE SLOWER! I'M NERVOUS!

DON'T WORRY, JEAN! SHE HANDLES LIKE A BABY CARRIAGE!



SUDDENLY FROM OUT OF THE BLOOD, A HIDE PALLID THING LOOMS ACROSS THE PATH OF THE SPEEDING AUTO...

FREDDIE? LOOK OUT!

WHAT THE...?



THERE IS A CRASH OF METAL AND SHATTERING GLASS AS TWO TONS OF STEEL HURTLÉ CRAZILY INTO THE FALLEN BARRIER...



...THEN, SILENCE! A TWISTED MASS OF WRECKAGE LIES GROTESQUELY ON A LONELY COUNTRY HIGHWAY...



SLOWLY, ONE OF THE COPILOTS OF THE SMASHED CAR STIRS... SHAKES HIS HEAD...



WHAT HAPPENED?  
I-I... HEART

FRANTICALLY, FREDRICK STRUGGLES TO FREE THE PRISONER FROM THE WRECKED AUTO... SHE'S...



SHOCKING! GOT TO... GET HELP!

SHOCKED AND STUNNED, THE MAN STAGGERS WEARILY DOWN THE ROAD IN SEARCH OF AID... A LIGHT...



OVER THERE! MAYBE... HAVE A PHONE? CAN... CALL A DOCTOR?

FRED GUNGAN... ACC REPORTER FOR THE "EVENING SUN"... MAKES HIS WAY TOWARD THE DARK FORM OF THE RAMSHACKLE HOUSE AND KROGG'S. THERE IS NO ANSWER...



NO ONE HOME? DOOR... OPEN?

HERE'S A PHONE! I'LL CALL GOD BLESS HIM! HE LIVES NEARBY!



IN A FEW MINUTES, ANOTHER CAR FLASHES ALONG THE HIGHWAY TOWARD THE SCENE OF THE ACCIDENT...

HERE HE COMES! *BOO...BOO!*  
IT'S ME...*FREDDIE!*



FRED DUNCAN GETS INTO THE DOCTOR'S CAR AND THEY RUSH TO THE SCENE OF THE MISDEED...

THERE SHE IS!

DID YOU CALL AN  
AMBULANCE?



THE CAR SCREECHES TO A STOP BEFORE THE WILDLY WAVING FIGURE OF FRED DUNCAN...

WHAT HAPPENED,  
FREDDIE?

ACCIDENT... I DROVE THE  
ROAD! JEAN'S UNDERMINE!  
*HURRY!*



WTF, BOO? I...

INCREDIBLE! THIS GIRL'S  
ALMOST DEAD... FROM LOSS  
OF BLOOD!



WHAT'S BUT...  
BUT...

YES! IT'S VERY  
STRANGE! SHE ONLY  
HAS A FEW MINOR CUTS  
ABOUT THE HEAD AND  
SHOULDERS, AND YET...



SHE HAS LOST AN ALMOST FATAL  
AMOUNT OF BLOOD! SHE  
WILL NEED A TRANSFUSION  
IMMEDIATELY!

WILL I DO?



A HASTY BLOOD-TYPE TEST PROVIDES:

NO, FREDDIE! YOU'RE  
NOT HER BLOOD  
TYPE! NEITHER  
AM I!

WHAT CAN  
WE DO? IS  
THERE TIME  
TO GET HER  
TO TOWN?





DOC BENTON AND FRED BURGAN TAKE JEAN BACK INTO TOWN AND HAVE HER ADMITTED TO THE HOSPITAL, / BUT THE NEXT MORNING...

FREDGEE! I CAME OVER AS SOON AS I COULD! JEAN'S DISAPPEARED!

FROM THE HOSPITAL? WHERE DID SHE GO?



I... I DON'T KNOW!

O'MON, DOC! WE'VE GOT TO LOOK FOR HER! SHE'S IN NO CONDITION TO BE ROAMING AROUND!



THERE IS NO SIGN OF JEAN AT HER APARTMENT, AND NONE OF HER FRIENDS OR RELATIVES HAVE BEEN HEAR! SHE HAS GONE VANISHED INTO THIN AIR...

AMBERIA, PERHAPS?

I... I WONDER!



THAT NIGHT, AS A BLESSED HOOD TRAMPS A LONELY HIGHWAY OUTSIDE OF TOWN...

STRANGE! I SEEM TO HEAR A FLAPPING NOISE... LIKE A BAT'S WINGS...



AND... IN THE BLACKNESS OF THE NIGHT, A TWISTED FIGURE, HIS FACE DISTORTED IN PAIN, LIES ON A LONELY ROAD. DEAD... THE BLOOD DRAINED FROM HIS CONTENTED BODY...





THE NEXT DAY THE TOWN IS SHOCKED BY THE DISCOVERY OF THE BODY.  
IT'S THE WORK OF A VAMPIRE!  
NONSENSE! THERE IS NO SUCH THING!  
DON'T BE TOO SURE, I'VE REMEMBERED OLD RUFUS...HOW HE DIED?



IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, FRED OSCHER SEARCHED EVERYWHERE FOR JEAN... TO NO AVAIL! MEANWHILE...  
FOUR DEATHS IN FOUR MONTHS! A PERSON CAN'T SAFF AT NIGHT ANYMORE!  
KUMPFEST! IT'S MADNESS!



AND THEN... ONE NIGHT... FRED OSCHER CAME TO FREEDOM.  
I... I'M BEEN THINKING ABOUT JEAN, FREDIE! SHE'S IN GREAT DANGER, WHEREVER SHE IS!  
WHAT DO YOU MEAN, FRED?



I REMEMBERED THAT WHEN I EXAMINED HER, AMONG THE SMALL LACERATIONS AND ABRASIONS ON HER NECK WERE TWO SMALL HOLES THAT MIGHT ACCOUNT FOR HER TERRIBLE LOSS OF BLOOD!  
THEN YOU THINK SHE WAS ATTACKED BY THE VAMPIRE WHILE I WAS CALLING YOU...



PRECISELY! BUT THE EMERGENCY TRANSFUSION ROBBED THE VAMPIRE OF A VICTIM! NOW, HOWEVER, IT WILL TRY AGAIN!  
BUT WHAT CAN I DO?



YOU'VE GOT TO GET THAT VAMPIRE BEFORE IT FINDS HER!  
WAIT, WAIT! A MINUTE!



THAT LONELY STREET OF ROAD WHERE JEAN AND I HAD THE ACCIDENT! ALL OF THE VAMPIRE'S VICTIMS WERE ATTACKED IN THAT SAME LOCALITY! IF WE WERE TO GO THERE, ARMED...





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ANOTHER  
"NEW TREND"  
SURE-FIRE WINNER!  
**ON SALE NOW**  
AT ALL NEWSSTANDS!



They had seen him here aboard-ship; unless he could escape now, the life to which he clung so precariously was doomed within the next few hours! They would hunt him down relentlessly . . . regardless of how crowded the ship was they would dispose of him so that no trace was left. After all, death was their business! And they were skilled practitioners

No matter where he hid they would hunt him down without remorse. To go to the ship's officers would be merely to expose his identity, and choosing between the methods of his pursuers and the authorities was something a fugitive could not do! There was only one way out: if he was to make good his escape he must leave the boat. Even out here in mid-ocean his chances for survival were better in the tossing seas than on the same deck which harbored certain death! After all, the ship was on one of the busiest trade routes . . . other craft were bound to pass by! And, overboard, they would probably consider him drowned . . . write him off their books as dead. It was his only chance!

Somehow he evaded them until after darkness had fallen around the churning ship. Silently he crept towards the stern rail, and reasonably sure that he had not been seen, he dove far over the ship's side. The impact of the water against his face and

chest stunned him . . . It was like feeling the blow of a sledge-hammer! Down down down he plunged, into the jet black turbulence of the water at the ship's rear. A great weight pressed in around him, as if the water itself was an enemy, in league with those who were intent on destroying him! He tried to move his arms, to thrash his legs, to fight his way back to the surface. In another thirty seconds he knew his breath would give out! He had to get back to the surface had to . . .

And then, somehow, he felt himself rising swiftly . . . being propelled upwards by a force he could not explain. In less time than it took him to plunge into the depths he shot clear of the water . . . and gulping free air once more, he discovered the source of his salvation. The water far yards around him boiled white and angry. He looked up in fear and saw the ship's stern hovering high and ominous above him. His plans had gone awry. Instead of being left far behind in its wake, he was being drawn ever closer to the ship!

Even as he fought desperately to keep his head above water he saw the ship veering closer. In the tempestuous milky-white of the ship's wake he saw the momentary glint of the propellers. Like immense razors they were cutting through the sea nothing could withstand their murderous sharpness! He was doomed . . . he had escaped the enemy on board ship only to fall prey to the slashing propellers even now sucking him forward! They were coming closer . . . those blades! He could hear their furious whirr . . . could even scent the smell of his own horrible death . . .



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## THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

**D**rag over that bed of nails, hidden, and drag your quivering bodies upon it! It's time for another our POINTED discussions! First, let's MARY the most of the variety on last year's gothic! My small start is **VAMPIRES**, after several long nights of feasting and drinking... I keep them well supplied with **BLOOD**, you know! ... has just handed me the dripping metal Edison's **ELECTRIFYING** tale, **A SHOCKING WAY TO DIE**, garnished first place in this year-by! Presents to you a ghastly little post entitled **THE THING FROM THE GRAVE**! Second place was taken by Graham Ingell's delirious, **DEATH JUTED HIM**! Naturally, **GHASTLY GRAHAME** is well represented this time with his **BLOOD TYPE "V"**... a real garden! **THE HOUSE OF HORROR**, manipulated by Kermans revealed third place honors. Fourth place was snagged by Wood with his **TERROR RIDE BURIAL**, the best, was in last place (Hansen)... **BURIAL** for honors! What a **GRAVE** night!

By this time, dearie Jane, I trust you have realized that this issue of TALES FROM THE CRYPT marks a milestone in publishing history! You've heard of the THREE MUSKETEERS - one for all and all for one? Well, in this issue - for the very first time - you have the THREE QUOULNATICS - each for herself and all for none! God, how we HATE each other! However, the VAILT-KEEPER and I have gained something by this unholy alliance! Yes, THE OLD WITCH tricked both of us into allowing her to appear in each of our magazines. This, plus the fact that she has her own magazine, THE HALIT OF FEAR, meant that she accepted three

COMES ON OUR SCENE! So there was only one thing to do!  
 UNITE... against the evil forces! So... from  
 now on, the Veah-Keeper will appear in my imagination,  
 and I in his imagination. THE VAULT OF HORROR  
 We are now working on a plan to trick the OLD  
 WITCH-I, by signing a contract with us so that we  
 can both appear in her mind, and even things up! So  
 look for the THREE GHOUULINATICS in three  
 magazines: TALES FROM THE CRYPT (OF  
 TERROR), THE VAULT OF HORROR, and  
 THE HAUNT OF FEAR.

Oh, dear more along before we witness the result my dear old one-a-tee! I have received requests for information on how to subscribe to my magazine "Sonnet"? Doncha like to communicate through internet corner looking for romance? Doncha like to arrange love affairs and not find a bequest all the copies have been sold out? Doncha like to be deprived of sleepless nights? Well, I don't blame you! So here's the wrap around from the MURPHY'S search? Send The and your name and address written clearly in blood for ink, if you simply cannot obtain that tasty bequest to me.

The Crypt Keeper  
Room 706, Dept. 12  
225 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 10014

For this paltry sum, you will receive a full year's supply — in disposing means of that, my teen-age magazine. And remember, keep those letters of approval and disapproval pouring in! Vote for your favorite story — and watch for the rocking results! Mail your letters to me at the above address.

STATEMENT OF THE DEVELOPMENT OF THE UNITED STATES OF AMERICA, 1914-1915, BY THE COMMISSIONERS OF THE BUREAU OF THE CENSUS, U.S. DEPARTMENT OF COMMERCE, WASHINGTON, D.C., 1916.

1. This is the latest address of the publisher, editor, business office, and business correspondence. Publisher's name, full name, street, city, state, zip code, telephone number, and telex number, if any, should be given. If the publisher is a corporation, the name of the corporation should be given. If the publisher is an individual, the name of the individual should be given. If the publisher is a partnership, the name of the partnership should be given. If the publisher is a government agency, the name of the agency should be given. If the publisher is a non-profit organization, the name of the organization should be given. If the publisher is a religious organization, the name of the organization should be given. If the publisher is a trade association, the name of the association should be given. If the publisher is a professional association, the name of the association should be given. If the publisher is a labor union, the name of the union should be given. If the publisher is a political party, the name of the party should be given. If the publisher is a social club, the name of the club should be given. If the publisher is a fraternal organization, the name of the organization should be given. If the publisher is a service organization, the name of the organization should be given. If the publisher is a community organization, the name of the organization should be given. If the publisher is a religious organization, the name of the organization should be given. If the publisher is a trade association, the name of the association should be given. If the publisher is a professional association, the name of the association should be given. If the publisher is a labor union, the name of the union should be given. If the publisher is a political party, the name of the party should be given. If the publisher is a social club, the name of the club should be given. If the publisher is a fraternal organization, the name of the organization should be given. If the publisher is a service organization, the name of the organization should be given. If the publisher is a community organization, the name of the organization should be given.

[illegible][illegible]

1. Subject : REPORT ON L.F.P. Western Mustang

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



HEE, HEE! WELCOME, DEAR READERS! COME IN! COME IN! I AM THE OLD WITCH! IN EACH ISSUE OF THIS, THE *CRYPT-KEEPERS* MAGAZINE, I BREW A SPINE-TINGLING TERROR-TALE HERE IN MY CAULDRON! AS THE CONTENTS STEAM AND BUBBLE, GAZE INTO THE VAPORS... AND SOON YOU'LL SEE THE FIRST SCENE OF A TALE I CALL...

## DEATH'S TURN!

A LONE FIGURE CARRYING A LEATHER BRIEF CASE STANDS IN THE DESERTED MIDWAY OF A RUN-DOWN AMUSEMENT PARK.

"HMMMM? THIS PLACE CERTAINLY *IS* A FLUMP! NOT A CUSTOMER AROUND!"



DOWN AT THE OTHER END OF THE EMPTY MIDWAY, IN A SHACK MARKED "OFFICE," TWO MEN ARE TALKING.

"WE WON'T BE ABLE TO KEEP SUCH ANOTHER WEEK, HARE! BUSINESS IS *NOTTEN*!"

"THERE, *NOOT*? BE A WIT TO GET FOLKS OUT HERE, CHOBSEN! WE'RE NOT LUCKY YET!"





WE NEED SOMETHING *NEW!* SOMETHING *DIFFERENT!* SOMETHING THAT NO OTHER AMUSEMENT PARK AROUND HERE HAS!

A *SUPER* *TRADITION*, EH, KARE?



SUDDENLY, THERE IS A KNOCK ON THE DOOR, AND THE MAN CARRYING THE BRIEF CASE ENTERS THE SHACK.

YEAH, BROT! WHAT CAN WE DO FOR YOU?

ARE YOU THE OWNERS OF THIS AMUSEMENT PARK?



YES! WE'RE THE UNFORTUNATE OWNERS!

GENTLEMEN! YOUR PROBLEMS ARE SOLVED!



ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF! I AM ROBERT BIXBY, CONSTRUCTION ENGINEER! I HAVE, HERE IN THIS BRIEF CASE, PLANS FOR A *NEW* TYPE HIGH-SPEED ROLLER-COASTER!

BUT WE HAVE A ROLLER-COASTER!



THAT OLD THING! IT'S *OUTDATED!* I HAVE DESIGNED A ROLLER-COASTER FAR *SUPERIOR* TO ONE'S FOUND IN ANY AMUSEMENT PARK IN THE WORLD! IT IS *FASTER*... HAS *SHARPER* DROPS! ONE, FOR EXAMPLE, IS ALMOST *STRAIGHT DOWN* FOR TWO HUNDRED FEET...

KARE! IS IT? AND WHAT WE NEED!



YES, OBVIOUS! I CAN SEE IT NOW! "THE FASTEST ROLLER-COASTER IN THE WORLD!"... "WE SURE YOU TO RIDE IT!"...

WELL! WE'LL BUY IT! LET'S SEE THE PLANS!

AGENTLY-MENTHED! JUST ONE STIPULATION!



STRINGS ATTACHED!

CRAFT WHAT'S YOUR PROPORTION? I WANT TO BE TAKEN IN AS A *TRICK* PART!

FOR THERE IS A *TRICK* PART IN THE ENTIRE AMUSEMENT!

"A THIRD PARTNER? WHY  
NOT? THIS HIGHWAY ROBBERY!"

"TAKE IT...OR LEAVE IT!  
THERE ARE OTHER  
MEN WHO'D BE  
WILLING TO..."



"DRAW! DRAW! IT'S A  
DEAL! WE'LL DRAW  
UP THE NECESSARY  
PAPERS!"

"GOOD! AS SOON AS WE'RE ALL  
SIGNED UP, I'LL SHOW YOU THE  
PLANS...AND A WORKING MODEL  
THAT I'VE CONSTRUCTED!"



"THE NEXT NIGHT, AT ROBERT BIRBY'S HOME..."

"NOW THAT THE PAPERS ARE ALL  
SIGNED AND IN ORDER BIRBY,  
HOW ABOUT SHOWING US THIS  
SUPER COLLIDER-COASTER?"

"ALL RIGHT, GENTLE-  
MEN! THIS WAY!"



"BIRBY LEDES BIRBY AND CROUCH INTO A LARGE  
ROOM..."

"THERE IT IS,  
GENTLEMEN! A SCALE-  
MODEL!"

"LOOKS KINDA queer  
TO ME!"



"IT'S BUILT ON THE PRINCIPLE OF A  
"WHEELED" RO RAILS! THIS CURVED  
RAILWAY IS SCIENTIFICALLY BARRIED  
AT EACH TURN AND DROPT! THIS  
REDUCES FRICTION AND ALLOWS  
GREATER SPEED!"

"THE FIRST DROPT IS PRACTICALLY  
*STRAIGHT DOWN!*" A SLIGHT  
TWIST IN THE CURVED TRACK  
KEEPS THE CAR FROM ACTUALLY  
BECOMING A FREE-FALLING BODY!  
THE SPEED GATHERED HERE WILL  
BE BETWEEN 100 AND 105  
*MILES PER HOUR!*"



"THERE THEN FOLLOWS A SERIES OF  
TURNS, BANKS, RISES, AND MORE  
DROPS CALCULATED TO MAINTAIN  
THIS SPEED THROUGHOUT THE RIDE!  
THE CAR IS STOPPED BY A  
TWO HUNDRED FOOT  
INCLINE...WHICH IT  
CLIMBS UNDER ITS  
OWN POWER! IT IS  
THEN *READY TO  
BEGIN AGAIN!*"

"AMAZING!  
ABSOLUTELY  
AMAZING!"





HOW SOON CAN CONSTRUCTION ON THIS... THIS "EIGHTH WONDER" BEGIN?

IMMEDIATELY!

"EIGHTH WONDER" SAY, THAT'S GREAT! THAT'S WHAT WE'LL CALL IT! THE "EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD!"



AND SO, WORK ON THE "NEW SUPER ROLLER-COASTER" IS BEGAIN! SOON, GIANT RIVERS OF STEEL FLOW SKYWARD...

BOOY! YOUR "BRAIN-CHILD" BETTER BE ALL YOU SAY IT IS... OR ELSE!

WE'VE SPENT EVERY LAST CENT WE'VE GOT IN THIS!

DON'T WORRY, GENTLEMEN! MATHEMATICAL PRINCIPLES CAN HOLD UP! IT WILL WORK!



LITTLE BY LITTLE, AS THE DAYS AND WEEKS GO BY, THE HUGE COLOSSUS TAKES SHAPE...

WELL, GENTLEMEN! IT IS ALMOST COMPLETE!



AND THEN, THE LONG AWAITED DAY ARRIVES WHEN THE LAST RIVET IS DRIVEN HOME... AND THE "EIGHTH WONDER OF THE WORLD" IS COMPLETED...

FINISHED... AT LAST!

HOW SOON WILL WE OPEN FOR BUSINESS?

PATIENCE, GENTLEMEN! FIRST THERE ARE SOME TESTS TO BE MADE!



TESTS?

BUT YOU SAID...

MATHEMATICAL! IT SHOULD WORK PERFECTLY! BUT IF THERE WAS ANY ERROR IN THE CONSTRUCTION... WELL... WE MUST TEST IT TO FIND OUT!



WHAT'S THE SANDRAG TEST FOR, BOOBY?

THE SANDRAGS REPRESENT OUR FUTURE RIGORS! THIS TEST WILL SHOW US IF A HUMAN BEING WILL REMAIN IN THE CAR... AS IT TAKES THE TURNS AND BANKS... OR WILL BE THROWN FROM IT...



THE CAR IS RELEASED... AND IT ROLLS DOWN AN INCLINE, GATHERING SPEED! THEN IT REACHES THE FIRST DROP! AT 104 MILES PER HOUR, IT PLUNGES EARTHWARD! THEN...

EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE GOING ACCORDING TO CALCULATIONS...

WHERE LOOK AT THAT CAR GO!

PEOPLE WILL COME FROM ALL OVER TO WATCH!





THE TEST IS A SUCCESS! THE SAND-  
BAGS REMAIN IN THE CAR... WHICH  
RETURNED FROM THE FIRST RIDE  
UNSCATCHED! THAT RIGHT...

GENTLEMEN! I DRINK SUCCESS!  
TO THE SUCCESS OF  
OUR AMUSEMENT  
PARK!

SUCCESS!



AFTER BIKY LEAVES, GROSSER  
TURNS TO KANE...

DID YOU HEAR HIM?  
OUR AMUSEMENT  
PARK! HE'S A PARTNER!  
BUT IT WAS OUR  
MONEY, KANE! YOURS  
AND MINE!

YEAH!  
WE WERE  
FOOLS  
TO GIVE  
HIM A  
THIRD  
PARTNER-  
SHIP.



BUT THERE'S A WAY,  
KANE! A WAY OF  
GETTING IT BACK!  
A WAY OF GETTING  
RID OF HIM!

YOU MEAN,  
KILL HIM?



WHY NOT? WE CAN MAKE  
IT LOOK LIKE AN ACCIDENT!

WHAT'S YOUR  
PLAN, GROSSER?



THE NEXT MORNING, KANE AND GROSSER MEET BIKY AT  
THE PARK.

WHAT'S UP,  
KANE?

GROSSER, HAVE YOU NOTICED  
SOMETHING FUNNY AS  
THE CAR MADE THE 90  
DEGREE TURN?

YES! COME OVER  
THERE! I'LL SHOW  
YOU AS THE CAR  
PASSES USE KANE.  
HERE, CAN START THE  
CAR AFTER WE GET  
THREE!



WE TWO MEN MAKE THEIR WAY TO THE BOTTOM OF THE  
90-DEGREE FOOT DROP! THEN GROSSER SIGNALS TO  
BIKY TO RELEASE THE CAR...

NOW LEAN OVER AND WATCH  
THE CAR! WHAT THERE? HERE,  
ONE COMES?

AFTER THIS, THERE'S  
ONE MORE TEST TO  
MAKE, GROSSER? I...



AS THE CAR, LOADED WITH SANDBAGS, HURTTLES DOWN  
THE ALMOST PERPENDICULAR INCLINE, GROSSER  
PUSHES BIKY... RIGHT INTO ITS PATH.

Y-A-A-A-K!

HE IS KILLED INSTANTLY! A TON OF STEEL, FLYING AT 100 MILES PER HOUR PAGES A MIGHTY WALL OF! THEY CALL IT AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT! KANE AND CROSBY HAVE IT RUSHED UP! THE PUBLICITY MIGHT HARM BUSINESS...



YEST! THE CROWDS COME FROM ALL OVER AS KANE HAD PREDICTED! THEY FILL THE NEWLY RENOVATED AMUSEMENT PARK... EACH PERSON GLAMORING TO BE THE FIRST TO RIDE THE "DISH OF THE WORLD".



THE TWO EAGER MEN GET INTO THE CAR... AND SIT DOWN.



THE CAR IS RELEASED AND IT BEGINS TO MOVE DOWN THE INCLINE, GATHERING SPEED.



THE CROWD IS STILL! A HUSH HAS FALLEN OVER IT! THE ONLY SOUND HEARD IS THE WHIRL OF THE ROLLER-COASTER CAR OVER ITS CURVED TRACK! THEN...



THE CAR MOVED UP THE TWO-HUNDRED FOOT INCLINE AND CAME TO A STOP! THE TWO MEN IN THE CAR DIDN'T MOVE! THEY JUST SAT THERE, LEERING THEIR HEADS AT A GROTESQUE ANGLE... THEIR EYES BULGING...



HEE, HEE! THAT'S RIGHT! THEY WERE DEAD! THEIR NECKS SNAPPED LIKE DRIED TWIGS! HEE, HEE! YEP, IT WAS THE FASTEST... THE GREATEST ROLLER COASTER IN THE WORLD! HEE, HEE! SO FAST... SO CONSTRUCTED...



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!



HEH! HEH! DON'T LOOK SO SURPRISED! YES, I AM THE *MAST-KEEPER*! I'VE BEEN INVITED BY THE *CHIFF-KEEPER* TO TELL ONE OF MY BETTER STORIES TO YOU! AND IN RETURN I'VE ASKED *YOU* TO RELATE ONE OF *YOUR* CHILLERS IN *MY* MAGAZINE, *THE VAULT OF HORROR*! SO COME IN AND RELAX! WE CAN *HOLD HANDS*! HEH! HEH! I HAVE A WHOLE *CASSETT* OF THEM! HEH! HEH! HEH! SETTLE BACK NOW, AND LET ME SPIN THE YARN I CALL...

The Curse of the Arnold Clan!

IT IS THE EVENING OF DECEMBER 31, 1953... NEW-YEAR'S EVE... AT THE HOME OF ROBERT AND BESS ARNOLD WE FIND THEM ENGROSSSED IN HECTIC PREPARATIONS FOR A PARTY...

OH, ROBERT, HOW COULD YOU BE SO THOUGHTLESS AS TO FORGET TO PICK UP YOUR COSTUME FROM THE STORE?

WELL, THERE'S NO USE CRYING OVER SPILT MILK! STORE'S CLOSED NOW. I'LL JUST HAVE TO GO WITHOUT. WAIT A MINUTE!

JOHN CROMB



UP IN THE ATTIC!  
THERE'S LOTS OF  
OLD CLOTHES UP  
THERE! CLOTHES  
WORN BY MY  
ANCESTORS  
GENERATIONS  
AGO! I'LL RUN  
UP AND HAVE  
A LOOK!

WELL, I HOPE  
YOU FIND  
SOMETHING!  
AND HURRY,  
DEAR... IT'S  
GETTING LATE!



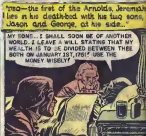
HAVEN'T BEEN UP HERE  
SINCE I WAS A KID! COMPOUND  
IT! I'M CERTAIN THOSE OLD  
CLOTHES WERE IN ONE OF  
THESE TRUNKS! MAYBE  
THAT ONE OVER THERE  
IN THE CORNER!



AND HERE'S WHAT I WAS  
LOOKING FOR! HOPE THEY  
FIT! DON'T WANT TO... SAY,  
WHAT'S THIS? AN OLD  
ROOM?



'THE CURSE OF THE ANNOLD CLAN'  
HMP! NEVER SAW THIS BEFORE! A  
BOOK TELLING ALL ABOUT MY  
ANCESTORS! WRITTEN IN 1903...  
ALMOST FIFTY YEARS AGO! WONDER  
WHAT IT SAYS...



two—the first of the Annolds, Jeremiah,  
lies in his death-bed with his two sons,  
Jason and George, at his side...

MY HOME... I SHALL SOON BE OF ANOTHER  
WORLD... I LEAVE A WILL STATING THAT MY  
WEALTH IS TO BE DIVIDED BETWEEN THEE  
BOTH ON JANUARY 1ST, 1761! USE THE  
MONEY MYSELF!

"But one son, Jason Annold, brooded and  
sulked as New Year's Day moved closer...  
ever closer..."



I SHALL NOT SHARE FATHER'S  
WEALTH WITH GEORGE! I AM  
OLDER THAN HE... I SHOULD  
HAVE IT ALL! I WILL NOT  
BE DONE OUT OF IT!

"And by New Year's Eve, Jason had decided..."



JASON! 'TIS NEW YEAR'S  
EVE! WHY DO YE BRING  
ME OUT HERE IN THIS  
WILDEST NIGHT?

PATIENCE, GEORGE!  
I HAVE SOMETHING  
TO SHOW THEE!



THERE, GEORGE! THERE, BEFORE THEE, IS WHAT I HAVE BROUGHT THEE TO SEE!

JASON! BE YE DAFT? ON SUCH A FREEZING EVE, YE BRING ME HERE TO GAZE AT A MERE HOLE IN THE EARTH?

"Jason tossed his brother's limp form into the gaping hole and heaped the cold, moist dirt upon him. Suddenly..."



JASON...

WHY? 'TIS GEORGE! CALLING TO ME FROM HIS GRAVE?

In a fearful state, Jason finished his work and returned home. He received the entire inheritance...but he lived in fear...



GOING CRAZY? CAN'T FORGET GEORGE'S CURSE? IF I BE ALIVE IN FIFTY YEARS, I WILL BE THE ELDEST ARNOLD! MIGHTY IF I GIVE HIM A DECENT BURIAL, THE CURSE WILL NOT OCCUR!



'TIS NO MERE HOLE IN THE EARTH, GEORGE! 'TIS THY GRAVE IT BE!!

JASON! 'TIS GEORGE! I CURSE THEE AND THY DESCENDANTS! EVERY FIFTY YEARS, ON NEW YEAR'S EVE; THE ELDEST OF THY DESCENDANTS SHALL BE BURNED ALIVE!! THIS BE MY CURSE, BROTHER JASON!



"And so it was that with the Spring thaw, George's body was 'found' and later laid to rest in a mausoleum..."



HERE, MY BROTHER! I BURY THEE WITH THY TRUSTY MUSKET AND POWDER-HORN IN THE HOPE THAT NOW AT LAST YOU WILL SET MY MIND AT REST!

"But Jason found no peace. He squandered all his wealth trying to find happiness, and on New Year's Eve, fifty years later, while cowering in his cellar, his house collapsed...and Jason was buried alive!"



"The first curse of the Arnold clan had come to pass."

"Jason Arnold had died in 1800, and for the next fifty years all was well...until New Year's Eve, 1850..."

THE ARNOLD CURSE SHAN'T WORK ON ME! I'VE LIVED IN THIS WILDERNESS FOR YEARS... ALL ALONE! I'LL NOT BE BURIED UNDER A FALLING HOUSE OR ANY SUCH THING!



"And for the second time the curse of the Arnold clan had taken its toll!"



"It was the same in 1800. On New Year's Eve, William Arnold, while working the night shift in a coal mine, was trapped in a shaft cave-in."



HEH, HEH, HEH! QUITE A TREASURY OF INFORMATION, EH? WHAT WOULD YOU DO IF YOU WERE READING THAT BOOK, AND IT WAS ABOUT YOUR FAMILY'S HEFT OF COURSE... YOU'D READ ON! AND THAT'S JUST WHAT ROBERT ARNOLD DID!



"No, there were no buildings or people by which Albert Arnold could be harmed. Nothing, except..."



WHA! "QUICKSAND!" I'M TRAPPED IN A BOD-OF QUICKSAND! AHEM! AHEM! I'LL BE BURIED ALIVE!

WHEP! THAT'S ALL THERE IS! LET'S SEE...LAST TIME WAS IN 1800, THEN THE NEXT TIME WILL BE NEW YEAR'S EVE, 1800... AND NOW! THAT'S TODAY! AND I'M THE OLDEST LIVING ARNOLD!



HA! WHY IT'S *AMAZING*! THOSE DEATHS WERE ONLY A LOT OF FREAK *ACCIDENTS*! HA! WHAT NONSENSE! NOTHING'S GOING TO HAPPEN TO ME!



I FOUND A HONEY OF A GOLD-  
NILL GOSTUME, DEAR!  
I'LL BE READY IN A FEW  
MINUTES! PLEASE HURRY,  
ROBERT, WE'RE  
LATE NOW!



HEH! WELL, ROBERT AND BESS  
WENT TO THE PARTY. THEY HAD  
A GAY TIME LAUGHING, DRINKING,  
DANCING! AND THEN THE HOST  
MADE AN ANNOUNCEMENT...



HA! HA! THAT'S RIGHT, FOLKS, A  
*SCAVENGER HUNT*! EVERYONE  
WILL DRAW A TICKET, AND THE  
FIRST PERSON TO BRING BACK  
WHATEVER'S WRITTEN ON THEIR  
TICKET GETS A *PRIZE*! G'WON!



OH, GOODNESS! I  
HAVE TO BRING  
BACK A  
*MOOSE-HEAD*!



GOSH! I HAVE TO FIND AN  
OLD MUSKET AND A  
POWDER-HORN! WHERE  
THE DEVIL WILL I ...  
HEY-HY...

MY ANCESTOR, GEORGE ARNOLD, WAS *BURIED*  
WITH A MUSKET AND POWDER-HORN! HM-HM  
AND THE CEMETERY ISN'T  
*FA*R FROM HERE, EITHER.





... CEMETERY IS JUST AHEAD! I'LL HAVE THAT MUSKET AND POWDER-HORN BEFORE THE OTHERS EVEN START!



I'LL HAVE TO SNEAK IN! THE CARETAKER WOULD NEVER LET ME IN *THIS* TIME OF NIGHT! ESPECIALLY IN *THIS* SET-UP!



THERE'S THE MAUSOLEUM OVER THERE! GO!! THIS PLACE IS *WIERD*! HOPE THIS DOESN'T TAKE LONG!



I'M IN LUCK! THIS DOOR IS SO OLD, THE LOCK HAS JUST ABOUT RUSTED AWAY! I COULD HAVE OPENED IT WITH A *SHOEFIN*!



AH! HERE IT IS! THE LAST RESTING PLACE OF GEORGE ARNOLD!



... MUSKET AND POWDER-HORN SHOULD BE INSIDE! *ONLY* THIS... THIS SLAB IS... SURE HEAVY!



WHOW! BOY! THAT WAS A *JOB*! UGH! WHAT A SMELL! HERE'S THE MUSKET AND... WHAT'S THAT?



*BLAZES!* THE CARETAKER'S COMING TO MAKE HIS ROUNDS! I CAN'T LET HIM FIND ME HERE! WHAT'LL I DO?



HE'S COMING CLOSER! IF HE SEES THIS OPEN DOOR, HE'LL INVESTIGATE! I'LL HIDE IN ONE OF THE COFFINS! AFTER HE PASSES, I'LL LEAVE!

OLD GEORGE WON'T MIND IF I USE HIS RESTING PLACE FOR A WHILE! NOW TO... CLOSE THIS... TOP!

**CLANK!**  
HEY! WHAT HAPPENED?  
THE LID! GREAT BOOTS! IT  
LOOKED WHEN I SHUT IT! I'M  
LOCKED IN! I CAN'T GET OUT!  
**HELP!**

CARETAKER! CARETAKER! I SWEAR! PLEASE!  
HELP ME! GET ME OUT! I'LL BE BURIED  
ALIVE! PLEASE!

**PLEASE!**

BUT THE CARETAKER, HIS EARS MUFFLED  
AGAINST THE COLD, DOESN'T HEAR THE CRIES FOR  
HELP THAT ARE BEING DROWNED OUT BY THE  
WINDY GALE, AND HE PLODS TIREDOLY ON...

ROBERT'S SCREAMS LASTED FOR A LONG TIME,  
BUT FINALLY (INEVITABLY) THEY CEASED! AND  
THEN ACROSS THE CEMETERY CAME THE CHIMES OF  
A CHURCH BELL... TOLLING THE HOUR OF MIDNIGHT!  
IT WAS NEW YEAR'S EVE... AND THE CURSE OF  
THE IRONOLD DEAN ONCE AGAIN HAD COME TRUE!

**HAFHAFHAF!** WELL, ROBERT REALLY GOT  
HIMSELF INTO A **GRAVE SITUATION**. DIDN'T HE?  
POOR ROBERT... TOO BAD HE HAD TO GO OUT  
WITH THE OLD YEAR! AT LEAST HE WON'T HAVE  
A NEW YEAR'S HANDOVER NO.  
ROBERT WASN'T DEAD **YET**.  
HE WAS JUST **DEAD**! HEH!  
WELL, VISIT WITH ME MAY  
I'M SAYING THE RIDLEY OF  
ROUNDER! DROP IN... HEH!  
ANY OLD CHIME!

THE  
END

**SPECIAL ...**

# INTRODUCTORY OFFER

*to Readers of this magazine ...*



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**NEW!** BOB WEST'S AMAZINGLY EASY  
"PICTURE METHOD"

## SHOWS HOW TO

# PLAY GUITAR

**IN 2 WEEKS**

**OR FOUR DOLLARS BACK**

**Think Of  
The Fun  
You'll Have**



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**ANN ARBOR MI 48106**  
**313/763-1111**

**EXPERIENCED GUITAR PLAYERS** have told me Bob Weir's "FUTURE METHOD" improves their playing tremendously and is ideal for beginners. Don't cover friends who are no longer because they play a musical instrument. LEARN TOMMY TALK GUITAR and hold the spotlight at parties, barbecues, or gatherings of friends. You will be amazed at how quickly it is to learn to play the guitar, even if you can't read a note of music.

**Pay in 2 WEEKS or YOUR MONEY BACK**

But Dick Wingo, author's favorite dealer player, shows you how to hit conventional "Pigeon Method." Don't judge this by its name. Based on my earlier "Pigeon" you'll find it's a lot more than just a method. Most "instructional courses" have a lot of theory, but Dick Wingo's new method has 42 actual photographs and 100 problems, just enough to get you started where you need to go. In fact, it's so good, I'd like to see it in a new edition. The second edition is out now. It's called "Pigeon Method, Second Edition." It's available at \$10.95. It's the best book on the market. It's the only book on the market that has been shown to be the most effective and successful.

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I REMEMBER HOW ASHLEY LEARNED TO  
PLAY THE BASSLINE SO WELL. A COMBO  
OF INTENT AND THE INSTANT PLAY  
A NOTE. I THINK  
THE MORE WE



THESE RESULTS SHOWED THAT  
THEY WERE NOT THE SAME  
STANDARDIZED SCORING SYSTEM AND  
WAS NOT THE SAME.



## A FEW DAYS LATER

100% PEOPLE AGREE THAT IT'S BETTER  
TO HAVE A GOOD LIFE, A GOOD JOB,  
AND A GOOD FUTURE.



JUST THREE FEET  
AND A POLE A TALL. CHARTER MEMBER JOHN  
AT HOME REPAIRS A LAM. SINKS A LAMPOST  
IN BENT POSTHOLE



YES, AND EVEN A TEN YEAR  
OLD CHILD CAN FOLLOW THIS  
SIMPLE "PICTURE METHOD".

**BOB WEST, Dept. 370,  
1115 MILWAUKEE AVE., CHICAGO 47, ILL.**

Dear Bob: Please call me if you're near a standard "Western Market" Guitar Center and tell them I will pay attention to the price of G.O.G. and guitars. I understand that if I am not playing beautiful music as I usually do I receive some Bob West Guitar Center, you will refund my bill.

1994, 1995, 1996, 1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 26

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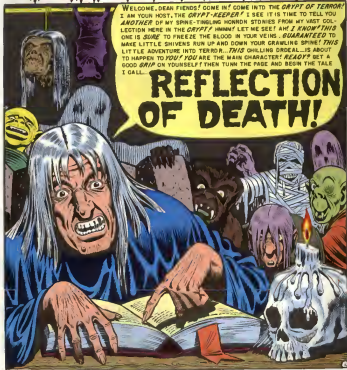
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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELCOME, DEAR FRIENDS! COME IN! COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! I AM YOUR HOST, THE CRYPT-KEEPER! I SEE IT IS TIME TO TELL YOU ANOTHER OF MY SPINE-TINGLING HORROR STORIES FROM MY VAST COLLECTION HERE IN THE CRYPT! HMM! LET ME SEE! AH! I KNOW! THIS ONE IS SURE TO FREEZE THE BLOOD IN YOUR VEINS. GUARANTEED TO MAKE LITTLE SHIVENS RUN UP AND DOWN YOUR CRAWLING SPINE! THIS LITTLE ADVENTURE INTO TERROR... THIS CHILLING DREAM... IS ABOUT TO HAPPEN TO YOU! YOU ARE THE MAIN CHARACTER! READY? GET A GOOD GRIP ON YOURSELF! THEN TURN THE PAGE AND BEGIN THE TALE I TELL...

## REFLECTION OF DEATH!





AHEAD OF YOU, THE WHITE LINE THAT DIVIDES THE ROAD STRETCHES INTO THE DARKNESS BEYOND YOUR HEADLIGHT BEAM! BESIDE YOU, CARL SITS PUFFING ON A CIGARETTE...

GETTING PRETTY COLD, ISN'T IT, CARL?



YEAH! AND THE HEATER'S ON THE FRITZ, TOO! IT'S GOOD WE WORE WARM CLOTHES!

YOU'RE AT THE WHEEL! YOU AND CARL HAVE BEEN DRIVING SINCE DAYBREAK! IN TWO MORE HOURS, YOU'LL BE HOME! YOU'RE TIRED, NOW! THE STRAIN OF DRIVING THROUGHOUT THE DAY AND INTO THE NIGHT IS BEGINNING TO HAVE ITS EFFECT! YOUR EYELIDS ARE HEAVY. THEY KEEP CLOSING...

YOU'D BETTER TAKE OVER, CARL! I'M GETTING TIRED! I'D HATE TO FALL ASLEEP AT THE WHEEL!

DRAY, AL! PULL OVER AND WE'LL SWITCH!



YOU STOP THE CAR AND CARL GETS OUT! YOU SLIDE ACROSS THE SEAT AND CARL SLIPS BEHIND THE WHEEL...

WHY DON'T YOU TAKE A SMOOZE, AL? I'LL WAKE YOU UP WHEN WE GET TO TOWN!



MAYBE... MAYBE... I WILL, CARL!

YOU DRAW YOUR COAT UP TIGHT AROUND YOU...PULL YOUR HAT DOWN...REACH INTO YOUR POCKET FOR YOUR GLOVES...



YOU STARE OUT THROUGH THE WINDSHIELD! THE ROAD COMES OUT OF THE DARKNESS AT YOU AND SLIDES BENEATH THE CAR...UNENDING...FASTER...FASTER! CARL BEGINS TO WHISTLE AN OFF-KEY TUNE! THE MOTOR PURRS...THE ROAD COMES ON, ON...



YOUR HEAD BEGINS TO NOD! CARL'S WHISTLING CONTINUES...FLAT...UNMELDIC! SUDDENLY HE GASPS! YOU LOOK UP! A PAIR OF HEADLIGHTS...BRIGHT...BLINDING...HURTLES AT YOU FROM THE DARKNESS! CARL SHOUTS! YOU TRY TO SCREAM BUT IT CHOKES UP IN YOUR THROAT...A RATTLING COUGH...

LOOK OUT...AL...WE'RE GOING TO HIT...



THERE IS A SPLINTERING SHEDDING CRASH OF METAL AND GLASS AND SQUEALING BRAKES...



YOU FEEL YOURSELF FLYING FORWARD, A BLASTING LIGHT...THE PAIN...THE COLD...AND THEN THE VELVET NIGHT CLOSES IN! ALL IS QUIET, EXCEPT FOR A DISTANT...FAR AWAY WHIMPERING...

THE BLACKNESS IS EMPTY. ETERNAL! YOU FLOAT IN IT... TURNING... TWISTING... FALLING... THEN RISING AGAIN! THE PAIN IS GONE... EVERYTHING IS GONE... ONLY THE DARKNESS... ON... ON... DARK... BLACK... EMPTY.



YOU OPEN YOUR EYES! TINY PIN-POINTS OF LIGHT BLINK BRIGHT AND DIM BEFORE YOU! A LEAF FLUTTERS. THEN GLIDES AT YOU! YOU ARE ON YOUR BACK... GAZING UP AT THE NIGHT SKY.



YOU RAISE YOUR HEAD AND LOOK ABOUT! YOU ARE LYING AT THE EDGE OF A ROAD! YOU REMEMBER NOW! THE HEADLIGHTS... THE CRASH... THERE MUST HAVE BEEN A COLLISION! BUT THE WRECK... THERE'S NO SIGN OF IT.



YOU GET TO YOUR FEET! YOUR CLOTHES ARE TORN AND DIRTY! THERE IS A SMELL... A SICKENING SMELL! YOU LOOK UP AND DOWN THE ROAD! NO SMASHED GLASS! NO TWISTED METAL! NOTHING! JUST A ROAD... CLEAN... WHITE... REACHING INTO THE NIGHT.



A CAR IS COMING! YOU STUMBLE OUT ONTO THE CONCRETE! YOU RAISE YOUR GLOVED HAND AS THE CAR BEARS DOWN UPON YOU! ITS WAILING BRAKES BRING IT TO A STOP.

CRAZY FOOL! DO YOU WANT TO GET YOURSELF KILLED? I... I...



YOU STEP CLOSE TO HIM! YOU BEGIN TO ASK HIM IF HE'LL DRIVE YOU INTO TOWN... THAT THERE'S BEEN A WRECK! SUDDENLY YOU SEE THE WILDOOD IN HIS EYES! A LOOK OF STARK TERROR! HE STARES AT YOU AND SHRIEKS...



THE CAR MESHES GEARS AND ROARS AWAY! YOU CAN HEAR HIM SCREAMING! YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND! THEN YOU LAUGH TO YOURSELF! OF COURSE! YOU MUST HAVE BEEN CUT IN THE ACCIDENT! MAYBE THE SIGHT OF BLOOD SCARED HIM! YOU START DOWN THE ROAD... TOWARD TOWN... TOWARD HOME.



THEN YOU SEE IT! THE FIRE! SOMEONE UNDER THE ROAD-BRIDGE... COOKING! YOU MOVE TOWARD HIM! PERHAPS HE HEARD THE CRASH... SAW THE ACCIDENT...



IT IS A HORD... A TRAMP Huddled near the fire! HE STIRS SOMETHING IN A CAN HUNG OVER THE FLAMES! HE LOOKS UP AS YOU APPROACH...



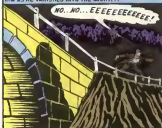
WELCOME, PARTNER! IF YOU'RE HUNGRY SET YOURSELF DOWN! THE STEW'S JUST ABOUT DONE!

YOU MOVE INTO THE FIRELIGHT! HE LOOKS INTO THE CAR... STIRS IT A BIT... THEN TURNS TOWARD YOU! SUDDENLY THE BLOOD DRAINS FROM HIS UNSHAVEN FACE! HE GRINDS...



E...E...KEEP AWAY...I...AAAAAGH!

THE TRAMP CLAWS HIS WAY UP TO THE EMBANKMENT AND RUNS, ~~SAVING HIMSELF~~ DOWN THE ROAD! YOU WATCH HIM AS HE VANISHES INTO THE NIGHT...

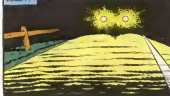


NO...NO...EEEEEEEEEEEEE!

YOU CONTINUE ON TOWARD TOWN! YOU'VE GOT TO GET HELP! THEN YOU STOP! YOU LOOK DOWN! A PIECE OF A NEWSPAPER IS UNDER YOUR FOOT! YOU READ THE DATE...



IT CAN'T BE! FEBRUARY 28TH! IMPOSSIBLE! THAT'S ALMOST TWO MONTHS FROM NOW! TODAY...TODAY IS JANUARY 1ST! YOU AND CARL HAD BEEN RETURNING FROM A NEW YEARS EVE PARTY! YOU HAD BEEN DRIVING ALL DAY...NEW YEARS DAY! NOW IT'S NEW YEARS NIGHT! OR IS IT? ANOTHER CAR IS COMING! YOU PUT THE PAPER IN YOUR POCKET AND STEP OUT ONTO THE ROAD...



SHE'S FRIGHTENED! WHAT WOMAN WOULDN'T BE? A LONELY ROAD AT NIGHT! YOU... A STRANGE MAN... STEPPING OUT IN FRONT OF HER CAR... FORGING HER TO STOP OR HIT YOU! OF COURSE SHE'S FRIGHTENED...



WHAT...WHAT DO YOU WANT?

YOU ARE ABOUT TO TELL HER NOT TO BE AFRAID... THAT YOU MEAN NO HARM! BUT THERE IS NO TIME! SHE LOOKS AT YOU... HER EYES ROLL... SHE GULGES A FAINT GROAN AND FAINTS...



YOU GET INTO HER CAR? YOU DRIVE IT INTO THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN AND LEAVE IT... THE WOMAN UNCONSCIOUS BEHIND THE WHEEL? YOU MAKE YOUR WAY HOME... HOME! BUT WHEN YOU REACH IT...



THE WINDOWS ARE BOARDED UP! YOU CANNOT UNDERSTAND! THERE IS A SIGN TACKLED TO THE HOUSE! YOU MOVE CLOSER... TO READ IT...



FORECLOSED! ON JANUARY 15, 1986 BUT TODAY IS... OR IS IT? THE NEWSPAPER YOU FOUND! REMEMBER HAVE YOU BEEN UNCONSCIOUS FOR ALMOST *TWO MONTHS*? YOU TURN AWAY FROM THE HOUSE! A LOW-FEATURE APPROACHES ON THE DESERTED DARK STREET...



YOU WALK TOWARD HIM? YOU WANT TO ASK HIM THE DATE? HE COMES CLOSER! THEN HE SEES YOU...



HE BEGINS TO RUN FROM YOU! YOU RUN AFTER HIM! YOU ONLY WANT TO ASK HIM A *QUESTION*! WHY DOES EVERYONE *STARE* AT YOU *WIDE-EYES*... *PAINT*... *SCREAM*... *RUN* FROM YOU? *WHY*? CARL'S HOUSE! YOU'RE IN FRONT OF CARL'S HOUSE NOW! CARL... WHO WAS WITH YOU... WHEN THE ACCIDENT HAPPENED? YOU GO UP THE STEPS... STAND BEFORE THE DOOR... RING THE BELL...



HEAVY FOOTSTEPS APPROACH! THE DOOR OPENS! CARL STARES OUT AT YOU! YOU WAIT FOR HIM TO SCREAM... TO RUN... WAIT FOR THAT LOOK OF HORROR... BUT NOTHING HAPPENS...



YOU RUSH INTO HIS APARTMENT? IT IS DARK? CARL OBJECTS? YOU TELL HIM THE STORY? YOU BLURT IT OUT... EVERYTHING! THE CRASH. HOW YOU WOKE UP. THE PEOPLE THAT SCREAMED WHEN THEY SAW YOU? EXCEPT CARL... CARL DID NOT SCREAM? CARL... YOUR FRIEND...

YOU JOKE WITH ME... WHOEVER YOU ARE...



HE STARES AT YOU, BLANKLY? THERE IS NO RECOGNITION? DON'T YOU KNOW ME, CARL? DON'T YOU RECOGNIZE YOUR OLD FRIEND AL? YOU SAY? HE SHAKES HIS HEAD AND TURNS AWAY.

YOU'RE FOOLING? THIS IS SOME SORT OF A GAG? SURELY YOU KNOW THAT AL AND I WERE IN AN ACCIDENT ALMOST TWO MONTHS AGO... THAT AL WAS KILLED... HORRIBLY Mangled.



.. AND I LOST MY SIGHT? THAT I AM TOTALLY BLIND?



YOU, DEAD? YOU GASP? YOU LOOK AROUND? A MIRROR? YOU GET UP, STAGGER TOWARDS IT.



... AND LOOK IN?



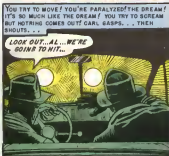
YOU SCREAM? YOU OPEN YOUR ROTTED, TORN, DECOMPOSED MOUTH AND SCREAM?



CARL IS AT YOUR SIDE SHAKING YOU... SHAKING YOU...

AL... AL...?





YOU FEEL YOURSELF THROWN FORWARD...A BLINDING LIGHT...A SHOOTING PAIN! THEN THE DARKNESS CLOSES IN...AND YOU'RE FLOATING IN A SEA OF VELVET BLACK...



YOU OPEN YOUR EYES! YOU CAN SEE THE STARS...ABOVE YOU...TWINKLING! A LEAF FLOATS FROM THE TREE OVERHEAD TO EARTH! YOU ARE LYING AT THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...



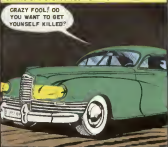
YOU LIFT YOUR HEAD AND GAZE DOWN TOWARD YOUR FEET! THE DREAM...SO MUCH LIKE THE DREAM...



YOU STRUGGLE TO YOUR FEET! THE ROAD IS BARE! THERE IS NO SIGN OF THE WRECK! FROM FAR OFF...THE SOUND OF A MOTOR TELLS YOU OF AN APPROACHING CAR! YOU STEP OUT INTO THE ROAD...



THE SMELL...THE SICKENING SMELL OF ROTTED FLESH BURNS YOUR NOSTRILS! SO MUCH LIKE THE DREAM...ONLY NOW YOU *KNOW* WHAT THE STENCH IS! THE CAR STOPS! YOU MOVE TOWARD IT...



THE DREAM IS *REAL*! YOU *KNOW* WHAT'S ABOUT TO HAPPEN! HE SEES YOUR FACE! YOU STEEL YOURSELF FOR HIS REACTION! IT COMES! A HAUNTING TERRIFIED SCREAM



YOU'RE DEAD! YOU *KNOW* IT...NOW! DEAD! AND THIS TIME...IT ISN'T A DREAM.

THE END

HEH, HEH! WELL, KIDDIES! THAT'S IT! LIKE IT? LIKE BEING A CORPSE? WELL, YOU MIGHT AS WELL GET USED TO IT! IT'S BOUND TO HAPPEN...EVENTUALLY! OH, COME, COME! WHY THE GRAVE LOOK? YOU'VE GOT TIME! HEH, HEH! MAYBE YOU'LL KNOW IT'S COMING BY HAVING A DREAM LIKE POOL AL IN THIS STORY! IF YOU DO, YOU'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO LOOK FORWARD TO! IN THE MEANTIME, YOU CAN LOOK FORWARD TO SOME MORE CHILLING TALES IN THIS BOOK! COMPOSE YOURSELF! READY? O.K. THEN, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE OLD WITCH!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YES! IT'S *ME* AGAIN! THE OLD WITCH... MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! SEE? THE FIRE UNDER MY CAULDRON IS LEAPING HIGHER AND HIGHER! MY EVIL BREW IS STEAMING AND BUBBLING! SO COME IN... COME IN AND GAZE INTO THE SWIRLING, BOILING CONTENTS OF MY CAULDRON! GAZE DEEP... AND SOON YOU'LL SEE A GRIPPING TERRIFYING TALE UNFOLD! A TALE I CALL...

## LAST RESPECTS!



THE RUSTY HINGES SQUEALED A HORRIFIED PROTEST AS HE PUSHED THE CEMETERY GATE OPEN! OVERHEAD, A COLD MOON CAST GREEN SHADOWS ON THE MOUNDS BEFORE THE GREY HEADSTONES...

I... I'M COMING, ANNA... I'M COMING!





HE STOOD FOR A MOMENT, HESITATING BEFORE THE TAMING SPHERES IN THE IRON PERCE. THEY MOVED THROUGH...

WHERE ARE YOU, ANNA? WHICH WAY...?



UP THE GRASS CARPETED PATH, PAST THE SNAKES OF THOSE LONG DEAD, THE MR. ARTHURY COLTDN... STUMBLED! IN HIS HANDS HE CLUTCHED A PAPER SAS! EVERY SO OFTER, HE STOPPED AND LOOKED ABOUT... SEARCHING... SEARCHING...

HELP ME, ANNA! I DON'T KNOW MY WAY! SUIDE ME, ANNA! SUIDE ME TO YOUR GRAVE!



SUDDENLY HE SAW IT STANDING COLD AND STILL IN THE WHITE MOORLIGHT... THE MAUSOLEUM! IT ROSE ABOVE THE GRAVE STONES LIKE A SKYSCRAPER RISES ABOVE THE SPRAWLING TEREVERTS OF A GREAT CITY. MAJESTIC, IMPOSING... CONTEMPTUOUS...

THAT MAUSOLEUM... PERHAPS...



ANNA HAD COME FROM A HIGH FAMILY! ARTHURY EDGED CLOSER! THEN HE SAW IT! THE LETTERS CUT DEEP AND DARK IN THE GLEAMING MARBLE OVER THE DOORWAY...

'GDDFN! THIS MUST BE IT! THIS MUST BE IT!'



ANTHONY BREATHED A SILENT PRAYER AS HE APPROACHED THE NUDE METAL DOOR! SUPPOSE IT SHOULD BE LOCKED! HE CLOSED HIS EYES AND LEANED AGAINST IT...

'OPEN! OH, THANK GOD IT'S OPEN!'



THE DOOR SWUNG SILENTLY! THE HIRSES HAD BEEN WELL DILED TO PREVENT SQUEEKS FROM INTRUDING UPON THE SOLEMNITY OF THE REGENT FUNERAL! ARTHURY STEPPED...



THE CASKET STOOD IN THE CENTER OF THE FLOOR... SILENT... STILL! ARTHURY GASPED, THEN THREW HIMSELF PROSTRATE UPON IT AND WEPT... QUIETLY, PITIFULLY...



AFTER A WHILE, THE NOISE SOBBING STOPPED! HE STOOD UP AND OPENED THE PAPER BAG! THE SHARP CRACKLE OF THE PAPER ECHOED FROM THE WINDOWLESS WALLS IN AN ABNORMAL VOLUME...

I... I BROUGHT IT, ANNA! I BROUGHT IT FOR YOU TO... TO SLEEP WITH... FOREVER.



IT WAS ONE OF THOSE FUNNY LITTLE ANIMALS THAT THEY GIVE AWAY AT AMUSEMENT PARKS WHEN YOU KNOCK OVER THE STACK OF BRUISED WOODEN BOTTLES! ANTHONY SNUBBED IT AGAINST HIS FACE FOR A MOMENT, THEN LAID IT NEVER-ENTLY UPON THE GOFFIN LID...

HERE IT IS... ANNA... HERE...



ANTHONY SHOOK HIS HEAD! THEN HE TRIED THE LID! IT WAS SEALED CLOSED! HE SIGHED.

...IT'S NO GOOD THIS WAS ANNA! YOU CAN'T FEEL IT... OUT HERE...



ANTHONY GAZED DOWN AT THE CASKET WITH THE FURRY MOUND LYING ON THE LID! HE STARED INTO THE BLACK WOOD OF THE STUDDED BOX! FROM FAR AWAY THE MUSIC DRIFTED TO HIM... HAPPY MUSIC... LAUGHTER! A MENNY-BO-ROUND... GOING ROUND AND ROUND AND ROUND...

TONY! LET'S RIDE IT.

SURE, ANNA! SURE! O'MOM!



THOSE STOLEN HOURS OF HAPPINESS! THAT DAY AT THE AMUSEMENT PARK WHEN HE WON ANNA THAT FUNNY LITTLE THING...

OH, TONY, TONY! YOU DID IT! YOU DID IT!

FOR YOU ANNA! JUST FOR YOU!

HERE YOU ARE, DEAD-EYE! HERE'S YOUR PRIZE!



THEN THE MUSIC FADED AWAY AND THE SOUND OF THE CAR MOTON REPLACED IT... THE HUM OF THE TWELVE CYLINDERS...

DON'T YOU THINK YOU'D BETTER GET IN BACK, ANNA? WE'RE GETTING CLOSE TO THE HOUSE!

OH, TONY DARLING! WHY DOES IT HAVE TO END? WHY?



AND THEN THE MOTON STOPPED! ANNA GOT OUT OF THE FRONT SEAT OF THE IMPRESSIVE LIMOUSINE, AND TONY OPENED THE REAR DOOR FOR HER! THEN HE PUT ON THE BRASS-BUTTONED CHAUFFEUR'S COAT, AND THE PATENT-LEATHER PEAKED CAP...

WHEN CAN WE DO THIS AGAIN, TONY? WHEN?

THE CAR IS ALWAYS AT YOUR DISPOSAL, MESS ANNA!



OH, TONY! DON'T JOKE WITH ME!  
KISS ME, MY DARLING! TELL  
YOUR WIFE YOU LOVE HER!

I LOVE YOU,  
ANNA!



HE STOOD THERE, STARING AT THE GASKETT OUTSIDE.  
A CLAP OF THUNDER EXPLODED! THE MAUSOLEUM DOOR  
SLAMMED WITH THE SUGGESTION OF HOT WIND! THE  
RAIN BEGAN FALLING...

IT'S RAINING, ANNA! RAINING LIKE  
THAT NIGHT... THAT NIGHT YOU CAME  
TO MY ROOM ABOVE THE GARAGE...



ANNA! WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING HERE?

I CAN'T STAND  
IT ANY LONGER,  
TONY! WE'VE  
GOT TO TELL  
MY UNCLE!



DON'T BE FOOLISH,  
ANNA! YOU KNOW  
WHAT WOULD  
HAPPEN! HE'D  
CHOWN YOU...  
CUT YOU OFF  
WITHOUT A  
CENT!

I DON'T  
CARE!  
I DON'T  
CARE!



YOU'VE FORGOTTEN  
ONE THING, ANNA!  
YOU'VE UNDERAGE!  
HE CAN ANNUSE THE  
MARRIAGE!

HE WOULDN'T!  
HE WOULDN'T!



YES! IT RAINED THAT NIGHT! BUT ANNA  
AND TONY DIDN'T CARE! THEY WERE  
TOGETHER! STOLEN MOMENTS OF  
HAPPINESS...

JUST ONE MORE  
KISS, MY DAR-  
LING!

YOU'VE GOT TO GO,  
ANNA! YOUR UNCLE  
WILL BE LOOKING  
FOR YOU!



ONE MORE KISS AND THEN SHE LEFT! SHE HURRIED ACROSS THE  
SOFT SANDS... HER FLIMSY DRESS CLINGING TO HER SKIN, RAIN-  
SOAKED! AND WHEN SHE OPENED THE DOOR...

WHERE WERE YOU? WHERE  
WERE YOU?

I... I TOOK A WALK, UNCLE!  
I GOT CAUGHT IN THE RAIN!



HE STOOD BEFORE ANNA...THERE IN THAT DRAFTY MANSION HE ACCUSED HER...INSULTED HER...

DON'T LIE TO ME! IT'S BEEN RAINING FOR HOURS! I SAW YOU COME ACROSS THE LAWN! YOU'VE BEEN TO THE GARAGE! TO HIM! I KNOW! I'VE SEEN THE WAY HE LOOKS AT YOU! DON'T THINK I'M BLIND! DON'T THINK I DON'T KNOW YOU'VE BEEN CARRYING ON...

UNCLE! STOP IT! STOP IT! I CAN'T STAND YOUR EVIL INSINUATIONS!

IF YOU MUST KNOW, WE'RE MARRIED!

WHAT? MARRIED TO THAT...THAT...

I DON'T CARE WHAT YOU SAY! I LOVE HIM! THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS!

SILLY FOOL! I'LL HAVE THE MARRIAGE ANNULLED! I WON'T LET YOU THROW YOUR LIFE AWAY...

SHE WAS IN BED THE NEXT DAY! PNEUMONIA! ANTHONY CAME TO SEE HER...

GO AWAY! YOU'RE NOT WANTED HERE!

BUT I'M HER HUSBAND, MR. COOPER!

YOU WON'T BE FOR LONG! I'VE STARTED ANNULMENT PROCEEDINGS! SHE'S UNDERAGE...

PLEASE! LET ME SEE HER! I LOVE HER! DON'T YOU UNDERSTAND?

HE TURNED TONY AWAY! THE DOCTOR CAME... AND TONY STOPPED HIM AS HE WAS LEAVING...

HOW IS SHE, DOCTOR?

SHE'S FAILING, TONY! DOESN'T SEEM TO WANT TO LIVE!

WHILE INSIDE...

TONY...SABR, I WANT TONY!

NO, NO! YOU'RE FINISHED WITH HIM! FINISHED!

AND SO SHE DIED! UP TO THE END, HER UNCLE HAD REFUSED TO LET TONY SEE HER! THE FUNERAL HAD BEEN HELD THAT AFTERNOON! TONY HAD NOT BEEN ALLOWED TO ATTEND! BUT, NOW HE WAS HERE...



YES, ANNA! I'M HERE!  
AND EVERYTHING IS  
ALL RIGHT! NOW! I'VE  
JUST KILLED HIM!  
I'VE JUST KILLED  
YOUR UNCLE!

FROM SOMEWHERE A  
STREAM OF WATER RAN  
DOWN THE STONE WALL  
OF THE MAUSOLEUM...  
DOWN THE WALL ONTO  
THE COLD FLOOR AND  
UNDER THE GASKET...



THE RAIN... COMING IN...

TONY TURNED TO GO! IT WAS  
OVER... FINISHED! NOW, HE  
WAS GOING AWAY! THE OLD  
MAN... WAS DEAD! ANNA'S  
DEATH HAD BEEN REVENGED!



GOOD-BYE, ANNA! SOMEDAY...  
I'LL COME BACK! SOMEDAY...

HE TUGGED AT THE HUGE MAUSOLEUM DOOR! IT  
DID NOT MOVE! IT WAS...



LOCKED! GOOD  
LORD! HOW'LL I  
GET OUT OF HERE?

TONY PULLED AND WRENCHED AT THE DOOR! IT WAS NO  
USE! SOMEONE WOULD HAVE TO COME AND OPEN IT FROM  
THE OTHER SIDE...



HELP ME! HELP ME, SOMEBODY!  
PLEASE... LET ME OUT!

A CLAP OF THUNDER WAS THE ONLY REPLY! TONY HAMMERED  
AT THE METAL DOOR UNTIL HIS FISTS WERE RAW AND BLOOD  
DROPPED FROM THEM...



I... I'LL STARVE TO DEATH...  
PLEASE... GOD... SOMEDAY... SOB... SOB...

THE RAIN FELLincessantly! IT FORMED LITTLE  
RIVERS THAT RAN OFF BETWEEN THE HEADSTONES!  
INSIDE THE MAUSOLEUM, A STEADY SOBBING  
ECHOED THE FALLING OF THE RAINDROPS...



THE NIGHT PASSED AND THE DAY DAWNED! AND THE DAY PASSED...AND NO ONE CAME TO THAT PART OF THE GEMETERY! SO NO ONE HEARD THE KNOCKING...THE CALLING FROM THE MAUSOLEUM...



A WEEK WENT BY...AND EVERY DAY THE KNOCKING...THE HAMMERING CONTINUED! BUT NO ONE HEARD...EXCEPT A FRIGHTENED TRAMP ONE EVENING AT TWILIGHT WHO RAN OFF, TERRIFIED! THE WEEK STRETCHED TO TWO WEEKS...THE POUNDING WAS BECOMING FAINTER NOW! BUT TONY WAS STILL ALIVE! THEN, ALMOST A MONTH LATER...THE BEATING AND THE CALLING STOPPED...



THE DAY FOLLOWING TONY'S DEATH, AFTER HAVING BEEN LOCKED IN THE MAUSOLEUM FOR ALMOST A MONTH, THEY FOUND HIM! THE ENGRAVER WAS DELIVERING THE PLACQUE FOR ANNA'S COFFIN...AND WHEN THEY SWUNG OPEN THE MASSIVE METAL DOOR...



GOOD LORD! LOOK! A DEAD MAN!

IT'S THAT CHAUFFEUR OF THEIRS! THE ONE THEY'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!

HE'S ONLY BEEN DEAD A DAY OR SO...

WHAT'S THIS... AROUND HIM?

BONES!

HEY...THIS COFFIN'S BEEN PRIED OPEN...



THE GUY MUST HAVE BEEN TRAPPED IN HERE! HE STAYED ALIVE BY CATCHING WATER IN THIS URN...

AND EATING... ON GOD, NO!



THEY TOOK TONY AWAY! THEY PUT THE WHITE PICKED-CLEAN BONES BACK INTO THE COFFIN AND SEALED IT UP AGAIN! THEN THEY CLOSED THE MAUSOLEUM...

I DON'T UNDERSTAND! IF HE HAD WATER AND...UM...FOOD, HOW COME HE DIED?

THE FORM! ALDEHYDE! EMBALMING FLUID! IT POISONED HIM!



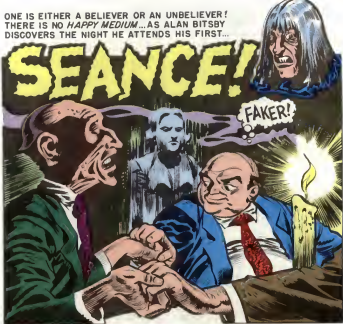
HEE, HEE! AND THAT'S MY STORY, DEAR READERS! TONY, ANNA, THE CRUEL OLD UNCLE...THEY'RE ALL DEAD NOW! EACH ONE KILLED THE OTHER...YOU MIGHT SAY! ANYWAY, IT WAS A MEATY LITTLE TALE, WASN'T IT? I HOPE YOU

DIDN'T...ER... GNDRE UP...AT THE BAD ENDING! WELL, IF YOUR STOMACH'S STOPPED DOING FLIP-FLOPS, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER! HE HAS ANOTHER TALE FOR YOU TO GHEW ON! BYE, NOW! SEE YOU LATER ON WITH ANOTHER POT OF PUTRESCENCE!



ONE IS EITHER A BELIEVER OR AN UNBELIEVER!  
THERE IS NO *HAPPY MEDIUM*...AS ALAN BITSBY  
DISCOVERS THE NIGHT HE ATTENDS HIS FIRST...

# SEANCE!



MY STORY BEGINS AT THE HOME OF WALTON FARNUM, ACCOUNTANT FOR THE FIRM OF BITSBY & COMPANY. AT THIS PARTICULAR MOMENT, WALTON IS HARD AT WORK 'ENTERTAINING' MR. AND MRS. ALAN BITSBY - THE BOSS AND HIS WIFE! LET'S SEE WHAT'S GOING ON---



MR. BITSBY? I...I FIND THAT I AM...*FORCED* TO ASK YOU FOR A *RAISE*...IN SALARY! THERE HAVE BEEN *EXTRA EXPENSES*...LATELY...AND...

LET'S NOT TALK *BUSINESS* TONIGHT, WALTON! SEE ME IN THE *MORNING*! I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO FOR YOU!





ON THANK YOU, MR. BITSBY! **THANK YOU!**

QUITE ALL RIGHT, WALTON! QUITE...



DEAR MR. AND MRS. BITSBY! I'M SO SORRY I'M LATE... BUT THE **SEANCE** TOOK SO LONG TODAY!

**SEANCE?** WHAT **SEANCE?**



THIS WHAT YOU MEAN BY **EXTRA EXPENSES**, WALTON? **SEANCE** YOUR WIFE TO **SEANCES?**

SHE...SHE WANTS TO GO, MR. BITSBY! AND IF IT MAKES HER **HAPPY**...



**HAPPY? BAN!** IDIOTIC **NONSENSE!** THOSE MEDIUMS ARE **FAKES!** **FRIEDS AND FAKES!** THEY PRY ON LONESOME OLD PEOPLE... TAKE ADVANTAGE OF THEIR LOSSES! WHOM DOES HE 'PRODUCE' FOR YOU, MRS. WALTON... YOUR **MOTHER?**

NO...MY POOR DEPARTED BROTHER, MAXIM! AND TODAY I HEARD HIS **VOICE**...



TELL US WHAT HAPPENED, AGNES!

YES! I'M **SO INTERESTED!** AREN'T YOU, ALAN?

NEVER MIND, MARTHA! THIS **SEANCE** IS NOT FOR YOU! YOU'RE A **HIGH MAN'S** WIFE! A MEDIUM WOULD MILE YOU **DIRT!**



'WELL,' AGNES FARNUM BEGAN, I ARRIVED AT THE MEDIUM'S HOUSE ABOUT THREE-TEN! THE **SEANCE** WAS SCHEDULED TO BEGIN AT THREE-FIFTEEN! THE OTHERS WERE THERE AHEAD OF ME...

MY NAME IS MRS. DOBER! DOCTOR **POODS** COMMUNICATES WITH MY **SON** WHO **DIED** IN THE **WAR!** PAUL SAYS HE'S **HAPPY** NOW!

I'M SO GLAD! I'VE COME TO HEAR MY BROTHER MAXIM! LAST WEEK HE **KNOCKED**, BUT **DID NOT SPEAK!**



YES! I REMEMBER! IT WAS TOO BAD! THE DOCTOR WORKED **SO HARD!** BUT DID YOU HEAR MY WIFE, SARAH? HOW **NEAR** SHE WAS?

YES, MR. HATCH! HER VOICE WAS **STRONG!**

THE DOCTOR SAYS HE'S GOING TO TRY TO MAKE MY SON **MATERIALIZE** TODAY!



SUDDENLY HE WAS IN THE ROOM! NO ONE SAW HIM COME IN! HIS DEEP, DARK, PIERCING EYES LOOKED FROM ONE OF US TO THE OTHER...

AM I SO GLAD YOU'VE COME AGAIN, MRS. FARNUM? PERHAPS TODAY, YOUR BROTHER MAXIM WILL SPEAK TO US!

I HOPE SO, DOCTOR!



"WE SAT AROUND THE TABLE! DOCTOR POGOS TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS! THEN..."

HOW! ALL 401M HANDS! THE SEANCE IS ABOUT TO BEGIN!



"MR. HATCH WAS ON MY LEFT! MRS. DOBER ON MY RIGHT! THE DOCTOR WAS DIRECTLY ACROSS FROM ME AND I COULD SEE HIS FACE IN THE GLOW OF THE CANDLE..."

EVERYONE... QUIET! CONCENTRATE! I AM ABOUT TO GO INTO MY FRANCE!



I WATCHED HIS FACE! HE STARED INTO THE CANDLE, MUTTERING UNINTELLIGIBLE WORDS! PERSPIRATION BROKE OUT ON HIS FOREHEAD! HE WRITHED AS IF HE WERE IN PAIN! THEN...

HARVEY!

SARAH!  
IS THAT YOU?



THE MEDIUM TWISTED IN WHAT SEEMED LIKE AGONY! WE WATCHED MR. HATCH'S FACE! HE STARED WIDE-EYED INTO THE DARKNESS...

YOU MUST FORGET ME, HARVEY! MY LIFE IS FINISHED! YOURS IS NOT! YOU MUST ACCEPT LIFE WITH-OUT ME! I... I'M GOING, NOW!

NO, SARAH!  
NO! COME BACK!



IT WAS MR. HATCH'S WIFE! HER VOICE WAS SOO... ALMOST A WHISPER...

YES, HARVEY! IT IS I!  
WHY DO YOU KEEP SENDING FOR ME, HARVEY?

I... I NEED YOU.  
SARAH! NEED YOU SO!



"SHE WAS GONE! THE DOCTOR WAS STILL IN HIS STUPOR, THEN IT CAME! THAT SHARP CLEAR RAPPING..."

IT IS YOUR BROTHER, MRS. FARNUM!

MAXIM? IS THAT YOU?  
SPEAK TO ME, MAXIM!  
PLEASE!



I LISTENED! I STRAINED MY EARS,  
BUT I HEARD NOTHING! THEN...A  
VOICE...FAR AWAY...



I CAN'T STAY  
LONG, AGNES!  
IT...IT'S SO  
HARD! MAYBE...  
MAYBE...NEXT...  
TIME...



HE'S GONE,  
MRS. FARRUM!  
DOCTOR FODOS  
COULDN'T  
HOLD HIM!



MRS. GORDON'S FACE LIT UP! IT WAS HER SON, PAUL!  
THE ONE THAT DIED IN THE WAR...



I WANT TO SEE YOU, PAUL!  
THE DOCTOR SAID HE'D TRY!  
PLEASE, DOCTOR! LET ME  
SEE HIM!



SLOWLY A MIST ROSE IN THE DARKNESS! IT BEGAN  
TO TAKE SHAPE! IT WAS A WAR...IN UNIFORM! A  
SOLDIER...



I SCREAMED! I COULDN'T HELP IT! I SAW HIM  
CLEARLY! HIS FACE WAS HALF-SHOT AWAY! IT WAS  
AWFUL...AWFUL...





THEN HE WAS GONE, AND THE SEANCE WAS OVER!

DUSH! IT GIVES ME THE *CHILLS*! DOESN'T IT *POW*, ALAN?

*FAKE!* NOTHING BUT A *FAKE*, THAT'S WHAT *HE* IS!



YOU'LL BET NO RAISE FROM *ME*, FARNUM, IF YOU HESIT UPON LETTING YOUR WIFE SPEND *GOOD MONEY* ON THAT *TRASH*!

BUT SHE HEARD HIS *VOICE*, MR. *SITSBY*! *MARUM'S* *VOICE*...



IF I *PROVE* HE'S A *FAKE*, FARNUM, WILL YOU *FORBID* YOUR WIFE'S SEEING HIM AGAIN?

HOW...HOW CAN YOU *EXPOSE* HIM, MR. *SITSBY*?



SIMPLE! MARTHA, MY WIFE, WILL STAY *HERE*! WE THREE WILL GO TO YOUR 'MEDIUM'! I'LL ASK TO SPEAK TO MY 'DEAR DEPARTED WIFE, MARTHA'! WHEN HE PRODUCES HER *SPIRIT*, YOU'LL *KNOW* HE'S A *FAKE*!

THAT SOUNDS FAIN ENOUGH TO *ME*!

HEH, HEH! A CLEVER PLOT, EH, DEAR READER? MRS. FARNUM CALLS DOCTOR PODDS AND MAKES THE APPOINTMENT! THE THREE OF THEM, *SITSBY* AND THE FARNUMS, LEAVE FOR THE MEDIUM'S HOUSE, WHILE MRS. *SITSBY* STAYS BEHIND!



THEY ARRIVE AND ARE USHERED INTO THE SEANCE ROOM! THEN THE MEDIUM ENTERS...

AH! SO THESE ARE THE PEOPLE YOU BROUGHT, MRS. FARNUM? YES! MY HUSBAND...



...AND MR. *SITSBY*, OUR FRIEND! HE'S A... *WIDOWER*! HE'D LIKE TO COMMUNICATE WITH HIS DEAR DEPARTED WIFE, MARTHA!

WOULDN'T YOU ALL SIT DOWN?



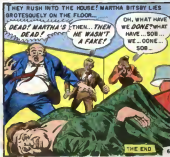
THE LIGHTS ARE LOWERED, AND THE SEANCE BEGINS! THEY ALL JOIN HANDS! THE DOCTOR GOES INTO HIS HYPNOTIC TRANCE! HE TWISTS AND SWAYS...



THE MEDIUM WHITCHES NOW! HE SEEMS TO BE IN TERRIFIC PAIN! HIS FACE IS BATHED IN SWEAT! THE VEINS ON HIS FOREHEAD STAND OUT...

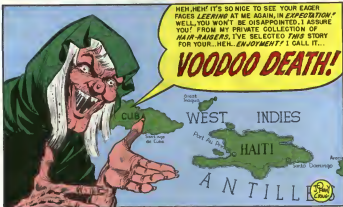


THEY LEAVE! THEY GO HOME TO WALTON FARMHJW'S HOUSE, CONVINCED! BITSBY IS TRIUMPHANT! AS WALTON OPENS THE DOOR, BITSBY CHIDES HIM...



THE END

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!



HEH! EVER READ TRAVEL FOLDERS? YOU KNOW... THOSE PAMPHLETS THAT TELL ABOUT ALL THE GLORIOUS WONDERS AND BEAUTIES OF THE WEST INDIES? PALM TREES... MOONLIGHT ON THE OCEAN... ETC... ETC.? HEH! HEH! HEH! ...STRANGE, ISN'T IT, THAT THEY NEVER MENTION *OTHER* INTERESTING SIGHTS, SIGHTS THAT TOURISTS ARE *NOT* TO SEE? SIGHTS LIKE... A *VOODOO RITUAL*?



BILL, LET'S GET OUT OF HERE! IF THOSE NATIVES CATCH US WATCHING THEIR RITUAL, THEY'LL...

*I KNOW! I KNOW! KEEP QUIET, WILL YOU?*



WHAT ARE THEY DOING?

A NATIVE WAS SHOT TO DEATH IN TOWN TODAY! THEY'RE WORKING OVER HIM NOW!



AS THEY WATCH THE DANCERS' FRENZY, THE HIGH PRIESTESS PLACES A DOLL BESIDE THE STILL FORM OF THE CORPSE...



THE **POOOOO** DRUMS BEAT LOUDER AND THE HIGH PRIESTESS BENDS OVER THE BODY! THE NATIVES CLOSE IN AROUND HER, BLOCKING HER FROM VIEW...

WHAT'S SHE DOING?

*I DON'T KNOW! I CAN'T SEE HER!*



MINUTES LATER, THE CHANTING, SCREAMING NATIVES WITHDRAW... LEAVING THE PRIESTESS STANDING OVER THE BODY AND THE DOLL! NOW THERE IS AN EXPECTANT SILENCE...



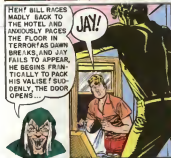
...AND THEN, THE DEAD NATIVE **STIRS**! HIS EYES OPEN, GLASSY AND EMPTY... AND HE **RISES**! THE DOLL STANDS UPRIGHT... AND THEN DARTS AWAY INTO THE JUNGLE!



BILL! THE DOLL! THE... THE DEAD MAN! HE'S ALIVE!! HE... THE...

SHUT UP, YOU PFFFT! FOOL! THEY'LL HEAR YOU!









...STRANGE... NO RETURN  
ADDRESS... NO POSTAGE...  
WONDER WHAT'S IN IT...



CURIOUS, BILL HASTILY RIPS THE PACKAGE OPEN!  
AND THEN HIS HANDS TREMBLE... HIS MOUTH DROPS  
WIDE AS HE STARES AT THE CONTENTS...



FRIGHTENED TERRIBLY BILL  
DASHES FROM THE ROOM! THEN  
HE STOPS...



I THREW IT IN  
THE FIRE! THE  
FLAMES WILL  
DESTROY IT!  
BUT...MAYBE...



...IT CAME BACK WHEN I THREW  
IT OUT THE PORTHOLE! IT CAN  
MOVE! IT MIGHT GET AWAY! I...  
I'D BETTER GO BACK...  
BETTER MAKE SURE!

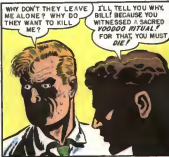


...THERE'S THE BOX...  
THE PACKAGE... BUT  
WHERE'S THE DOLL?



BONE? SOMEWHERE IN THIS ROOM! HIDING...  
WAITING TO POUNCE ON ME! WAITING TO  
STAB ME WITH THAT... THAT NEEDLE!  
HELP! HELP!





MY...MY  
HEART!  
GETTING  
NUMB...  
HURTS!

YES! THE NEEDLE  
WAS PRICKED!  
SOON YOUR WHOLE  
BODY WILL HURT!  
THEN YOU'LL BE  
DEAD...AS I AM  
DEAD!



YOU'RE DEAD! AND I'LL BE  
DEAD *CRASP* IN A MOMENT!  
*CRASP* THIS DOLL! IT...IT  
KILLED ME! THIS WICKED,  
VIGOROUS *VOOOOO* DOLL!



YES, I'M DEAD! THE NATIVES *KILLED* ME THAT NIGHT! THEY  
KILLED ME AND BROUGHT ME BACK TO *LIFE*...LIKE THEY DID  
TO THAT DEAD NATIVE! THEY *SENT* ME TO YOU WITH THAT  
*VOOOOO* DOLL TO PUNISH YOU! THE DOLL HAS DONE ITS  
JOB!.. AND WHEN YOU DIE I WILL CEASE TO *EXIST* ALSO!  
*I'M A ZOMBIE!*



I'LL DESTROY IT!.. RIP IT  
TO SHREDS! RIP IT!*CRASP*!  
TEAR IT!..?



WHA...  
WHAT'S  
THIS?

BILL'S RAGE SUDDENLY CEASED!  
A SCREAM STRANGLES IN HIS  
THROAT AS HE STARES DOWN AT  
WHAT HIS HAND HOLDS. . .

*GOOD LORD!* IT'S A...  
*HEART!* A HUMAN HEART!



YES, BILL! THAT'S  
HOW THEY GAVE  
IT LIFE! THEY  
GAVE THE DOLL  
A HEART!

*MY*  
*HEART!*



-THE  
END-

HEH! HEH! HEH! SUCH JOY! NOW WASN'T THAT  
HEART-RENDING? OF COURSE, JAY COULD  
HAVE TOLD BILL WHAT HAD HAPPENED, BUT  
I GUESS HE JUST *DON'T* HAVE THE HEART!  
WELL, BILL GOT THE POINT, HEH! HEH...IN THE  
GUTTING CLIMAX TO THIS *THRILLING* TALE!  
I HOPE I'LL BE SEEING YOU IN MY *OWN*  
MAGAZINE, *THE VAULT OF HORROR!* UNTIL  
THEN, FRIENDS... BE OF *STOUT* HEART...  
HEH, HEH, HEH!



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# TALES



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EDITION

NO. 24

FROM THE

# CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPTID



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



ELBSTER

# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! I SEE YOU GOT UP ENOUGH NERVE TO BUY *TALKS FROM THE CRYPT* AGAIN! WELL, I WON'T SHAMPOON YOU! YOU'LL GET YOUR FAIR SHARE OF SHAKES AND SHIVERS, BELIEVE ME! PEACH TO BEGIN! GOOD! NOW LIE BACK ON THE MARBLE SLAB, PULL THE SHEET UP OVER YOUR HEAD, AND I'LL TELL YOU THE FIRST STORY! IT'S HARRY GORDON'S STORY, TOLD IN *His OWN WORDS!*" HE CALLS IT.

## BATS IN MY BELFRY!



I FIRST FOUND OUT THAT I WAS GOING DEAF WHEN I VISITED OUR FAMILY DOCTOR. I HAD GONE TO HIM BECAUSE OF A PAINFUL EARRACHE.

I'M SORRY, HENRY! I KNOW WHAT THIS WILL DO TO YOUR CAREER! "THE SYMPTOMS ARE UNMISTAKABLE!" IN A MONTH OR SO YOU WILL BE STONE DEAF!

ARE YOU SURE, DOCTOR? CAN'T YOU DO ANYTHING? OPERATE?

NOT ANYTHING  
CAN BE DONE  
FOR YOU! THERE'S  
NO OPERATION!

I SEE! WELL  
... THANK YOU  
FOR EVERYTHING!  
DOCTOR!



I WENT HOME TO MY WIFE JOAN! I  
TOLD HER WHAT THE DOCTOR HAD  
SAID...

YOU... YOU MEAN  
YOU WON'T BE  
ABLE TO ACT  
ANYMORE?

HOW COULD  
IT? TO MISS MY  
VOICE  
EXPRESSION  
WOULD BE LOST!



THERE MUST BE  
SOME FOLKS THEY  
CAN DO! SO I SEE  
SPECIALISTS?  
WAKE UP!

I WILL, DEAR!  
I WILL...



BUT EVERY DOCTOR I WENT TO TOLD ME THE SAME  
STORY! IT WAS USELESS! WHEN I STARTED TO MISS  
OUR DANCE...

SORRY, HARRY! WE'LL  
HAVE TO GET ANOTHER  
STAIR!

HUNT! WHAT DID YOU  
SAY?



AND THEN IT CAME! THE THICK, HEAVY SILENCE! I  
WAS STONE DEAF! I WALKED IN A WORLD OF STILL-  
NESS! THE TRAFFIC, THE CROWDS, THE ORCHESTRA  
IN MY DREAMS... ALL SILENT! I HAD TO LEARN TO  
LIP-READ TO UNDERSTAND WHAT JOAN SAID TO ME...

I SAID OUR HOME'S PRACTICALLY  
BONE! UNDERSTAND? WE'RE  
ALMOST BONE... BONE...  
CLEANED OUT!

YES, JOAN...



THINGS GOT WORSE! I TRIED TO FIND WORK, BUT I COULDN'T  
DO ANYTHING! ACTING WAS ALL I KNEW! THEN I THOUGHT  
OF AN OLD FRIEND, JOHN WAYNE! JOHN AND I HAD PLAYED  
SUMMER STOCK TOGETHER! THEN JOHN HAD SOME BLIND!  
I WENT TO SEE HIM...

WELL, WELL, HARRY GORDON!  
IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU!

DID... DID YOU SAY MY  
NAME, JOHN? I... I'M  
DEAF! I CAN'T HEAR  
YOU! DID YOU SAY MY  
NAME?



OF COURSE! I RECOGNIZED  
YOU IMMEDIATELY!

YOU CAN SEE?  
THEN WHY DO YOU  
WEAR DARK  
GLASSES?



WILLIAM WINDOM

TO HIDE MY EYES? "GOOD LORD!"  
THESE EYES?



JOHN'S EYES BLEARIED YELLOW IN  
THE DIM LIGHT OF HIS ROOM. THEY  
WERE THE EYES OF A CAT.

WHAT...WHAT DID  
YOU DO TO  
YOURSELF?  
YOUR EYES...



YES? THEY'RE CAT'S  
EYES! BUT **WOOO**  
**GARD**, HARRY?  
I CAN **SEE**!

I HAD DIFFICULTY READING JOHN'S  
LIPS, BUT I MANAGED TO UNDERSTAND  
ENOUGH OF WHAT HE SAID TO GET  
THE WHOLE STORY...

I FOUND  
OUT ABOUT HIM THROUGH  
ANOTHER EX-BLIND MAN. HE'S  
A **DEAFMUT**. HE OPERATED ON  
ME! I **LOST** THESE CAT'S  
EYES! AND NOW, I CAN  
**SEE**...



DO YOU THINK HE CAN HELP ME,  
JOHN. RESTORE MY HEARING  
THE SAME WAY?



WHY DON'T YOU GO  
SEE HIM? I'LL GIVE  
YOU HIS  
ADDRESS...

THE SHOP WAS IN A DARK AND WINDING BACK STREET  
IN THE SHABBIEST PART OF THE CITY. THERE WERE  
STUFFED ANIMALS IN THE DIRT WINDOWS.



JOHN SAID HE WASN'T A  
DOCTOR... BUT... **THIS**? THIS  
LOOKS LIKE A **DEAFMUT**'S  
SHOP!

I WENT IN. A LITTLE BELL TINKLED BEHIND A CURTAINED  
DOOR AT THE REAR OF THE SHOP. THE DOOR OF STAIN-  
LESS AND CRIST HUNG HEAVILY ON THE AIR. HE CAME  
FROM BEHIND THE CURTAIN. HE WAS TALL AND DARK,  
SLIMMER LOOKING...

YOU...  
YOU WERE RECOMMENDED...  
BY A FRIEND? YOU... HELPED  
HIM TO SEE AGAIN? I  
WONDERED IF...



I SEE BY THE WAY  
YOU WATCH MY LIPS  
THAT YOU ARE DEAF?  
COME INTO THE BACK?  
I WILL EXAMINE YOU?

THE REAR OF THE SHOP LOOKED LIKE AN ALCHEMIST'S  
HIGHTMARE. THERE WERE BOTTLES AND JARS OF  
VARIOUS COLORED LIQUIDS AND POWDERS. OUT IN THE  
CENTER OF THE ROOM WAS A MODERN-LOOKING OPERAT-  
ING TABLE WITH UP-TO-DATE EQUIPMENT. HE EXAMINED  
ME BRIEFLY...



YOUR AUDITORY NERVES ARE  
PARALYZED! I WILL HAVE TO REPLACE  
YOUR **WHOLE HEARING SYSTEM**  
WITH SOMETHING **DIFFERENT**...



WHAT DO YOU HAVE  
IN MIND?

I PROPOSE TRANSFER-  
RING THE AUDITORY  
SYSTEM OF A RAT INTO  
YOUR BODY...



A RAT?

TEST THE RAT'S AUDITORY SYSTEM IS **IMPOSED?**  
IT IS **EXTRA-SENSITIVE!** IF THE OPERATION IS A  
SUCCESS, YOU WILL BE ABLE TO **HEAR BETTER**  
THAN YOU DID **BEFORE** YOU LOST YOUR HEARING...



I AGREE TO THE OPERATION! AFTER  
ALL... WHAT DID I HAVE TO LOSE?

BREATHE DEEP, MR. GORDON!



WHEN I CAME OUT OF THE ANES-  
THETIC, I LOOKED ABOUT! HE WAS  
STANDING OVER ME! HE STARTED  
TO SPEAK...

MY HEAD! **DON'T TALK!**

HOW DO YOU FEEL?



HIS VOICE SLAMMED INTO MY SPIRIT!  
IT WAS HARSH AND LOUD...

YOU'LL GET USED  
TO IT, MR. GORDON!

I... I  
CERTAINLY  
**HOPE** so!



CAN YOU IMAGINE THE SENSATION? HAVE YOU EVER  
TURNED A RADIO UP **FOUL BLAST?** THAT'S WHAT  
EVERYTHING SOUNDED LIKE TO ME AS I MADE MY  
WAY HOME! WHEN I OPENED THE DOOR I HEARD JOAN'S  
VOICE! SHE WAS WAITING ON THE PHONE...

IS THERE HE JUST CAME IN? I'LL  
HAVE TO RUN UP NOW, CARLINE!  
SCOOBY, DEAREST? YES... OF  
COURSE I LOVE YOU!



I COULDN'T **BELIEVE** IT! JOAN... AND ANOTHER  
JOAN? I DECIDED **NOT** TO TELL JOAN ABOUT MY GOOD  
FORTUNE... ABOUT MY HEARING BEING RESTORED! I  
WANTED TO WAIT... TO FIND OUT MORE! THAT NIGHT,  
I COULDN'T SLEEP! I GOT DRESSED AND WENT FOR  
A WALK...



FUNNY! I HAVE THE  
STRANGEST FEELING...  
LIKE I WANT TO  
**SCREAM**...

I GUESS I WALKED ALL NIGHT! WHEN I RETURNED, JOAN WRO-GONE! SHE HAD GOTTEN A JOB SINCE I LOST MY HEARING AND MUST HAVE LEFT EARLY THAT MORNING...



A HEAVY DROWSINESS CAME OVER ME? I DON'T REMEMBER FALLING ASLEEP... BUT WHEN I WOKED



I SLOPPED TO THE FLOOR! I WAS IN A CLOSET! I HAD FALLEN ASLEEP HANGING UPSIDE DOWN FROM THE CLOTHES POLE



I STUMBLED INTO THE BATHROOM AND LOOKED AT MYSELF IN THE MIRROR? I NEEDED A SHAVE EARLY, BUT THERE WAS SOMETHING ELSE



I WAS FRIGHTENED? I SHOWN CAREFULLY CLEAVING MY FACE OF THE NIGHT? THEN I STEPPED INTO THE SHOWER? AS I WASHED MY ARM TO SOAP SOAP IT



I DRESSED QUICKLY AND RUSHED TO MY FRIEND JOHN'S HOUSE... JOHN WHO HAD FIRST RECOGNIZED THE STRANGE SHOP WITH ITS STILL STRANGER PROPRIETARY? IT WAS GETTING DARK OUTSIDE? I BLINK IN HIS DOOR WITHOUT KNOWING...



HIS ROOM WAS DARK! LIT? HIS FELINE EYES GLOWED WITH AN EERIE YELLOW LIGHT? HE LAY IN A CORNER, WHITE, PICKED-CLEAN, BORED ABOUT WHAT HIS FACE WAS COVERED WITH A DARK-BLACK FUR.



IT'S THAT HORRIBLE POND! HE... HE'S DONE SOMETHING TO ME! THESE AREN'T CAT'S EYES HE'S GIVEN ME! THEY'RE THE EYES OF A PANTHER! AND... I CAN'T HELP MYSELF! I... I HAVE AN URGENT LINE TO... *CALL!*

LOVE  
HELP  
ME!

JOHN CLAPPED ON A LIGHT...

LOOK AT ME! LOOK! I'M EVEN BEGINNING TO LOOK LIKE A PANTHER! DON'T GO TO HIM, HARRY! DON'T...

IT'S TOO  
LATE, JOHN!  
IT'S TOO  
LATE!

JOHN SMILED! HIS EYES SHINED! I GOT OUT! I BEGAN TO WALK...

THAT EXPLAINS MY FALLING ASLEEP HANGING UPSIDE DOWN IN THE CLOSET... THE SEET HAIR ON MY FACE... THE MEMORANE GROWING ACROSS MY ARMPITS! I... I'M TURNING INTO A BAT!

AND THAT NIGHT, AS I WALKED THROUGH THE BLACKNESS, I BEGAN TO UTTER SHORT SHRIIL SHRIERS! AND I LISTENED FOR THE SHRIERS TO ECHO BACK! I WAS USING THE BAT'S RADAR-LIKE DEVICE FOR TRAVELING THROUGH THE DARKNESS! WHEN DAWN CAME, I MADE MY WAY HOME...

WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN ALL NIGHT? CAN YOU UNDERSTAND MET WHY DID YOU STAY OUT ALL NIGHT?

I... I GOT A JOB, JOAN! NIGHT WORK!

GOOD! THEN I'LL GIVE MYNE... TODAY!

IF YOU LIKE, JOAN! I... I'M TIRED! I'M GOING TO BED!

SHE WENT OUT AND I LAY EXHAUSTED ON THE BED! AGAIN, I DON'T REMEMBER FALLING ASLEEP, BUT WHEN I AWOKED WAS HANGING UPSIDE DOWN IN THE CLOSET! I HEARD VOICES... JOAN'S VOICE... AND A MAN'S...

HE CARRIED A LARGE INSURANCE POLICY. \$-BLOOD! HE TOOK IT OUT WHILE HE WAS AGING AND MAKING GOOD MONEY!

IS IT STILL IN EFFECT?

I LISTENED FROM MY LAIR IN THE CLOSET, I LISTENED...

YES! THE PREMIUM IS DUE NEXT MONTH!

WE'LL BE RIGHT AFTER WE KILL HIM.



I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EARS! THEY WERE PLANNING TO **KIDNAP** ME? I GOT DOWN FROM THE SLOTTED POLE AND SLOWLY OPENED THE DOOR...



I RUSHED DOWN THE STAIRS AND **BOOM!** THE DOOR BEFORE THEY COULD STOP ME.

IT WAS **HARRY!** HE MUST HAVE **HEARD** US! HE'LL GO TO THE POLICE!

I'LL **STOP** HIM... IF I HAVE TO...



JOAN'S LOVER CAME AFTER ME! THE SIDEWALKS WERE DARK AND DESERTED! I... **RAN...** OTHERS LITTLE SHRIEL HIGH-PITCHED SHRIERS! THEY NAMED ME OF FENSER, DEAD-END ALLEYS, AND BLIND STREETS...



HURRY! IT'S NO USE! I'LL GET YOU...

AS I RAN, I LOOKED DOWN! CLAMS SPRANG FROM MY FINGERS WHERE NAILS HAD STOPPED... AND WHEN I DO... **HARRY!**



I PULSED MY CLAMMED HAND OVER MY NOSE! IT WAS **HARRY!**... AND OVER MY LOWER LIP **HUSS!**...



FANST! I'VE SHOWN FANST!

WHEN I GET YOU, HARRY, I'LL KILL YOU!

I STOPPED RUNNING! THERE WAS NO NEED TO RUN ANY LONGER! I KNEW WHAT I HAD TO DO! JOAN'S LOVER CAME UP TO ME, LEECHING! THEN, HIS EYES WIDENED IN HORROR! I SPRANG AT HIM...



NO... **NOT** KEEP AWAY!

HE LAY SPRAWLED BRUTALLY ON THE COBBLESTONES... WHITE AS CHALK! TWO PUNCTURES THICKLED CLARKE ON HIS NECK! HE WAS DEAD! I HAD DRAINED HIS BLOOD...



I... I'M NOT...  
JUST AN  
ORDINARY  
BAT...



I'M A VAMPIRE BAT!

I RAPIDLY FLEW BACK THROUGH THE STREETS TO MY HOUSE... BACK TO JOHN...

DO YOU GET HIM,  
CARL... **HARRY!**  
WHAT... WHAT'S  
HAPPENED  
TO YOU?

I KILLED  
HIM, JOHN!



I KILLED HIM, AS YOU HAD PLANNED TO **KILL ME!** AND NOW I MUST KILL YOU... FOR...



NO, HARRY!  
NO!

HER THROAT WAS WHITE AND SOFT... NOT LIKE HIS! WHEN I HAD FINISHED...



NOW, I'VE GOT TO GO AWAY...  
AND **HIDE!**

I FOUND A PLACE... A GOOD GREAT PLACE TO HIDE! IT'S IN THIS COFFIN, IN THIS MAUSOLEUM! WHAT DID I DO WITH THE BODY THAT OCCUPIED IT BEFORE I CAME? OH, I BROUGHT IT TO JOHN... MY FRIEND! HE MADE SHORT WORK OF IT!



HER, HEN? WELL, THAT'S HARRY'S STORY, SIDDIEM! PERSONALLY, I THINK HE WAS A LITTLE **BATTE**, DON'T YOU? OH, BY THE WAY! IF YOU HAVEN'T ALREADY RECEIVED MY 5 BY 7 PICTURE... NOT A CRATING BUT AN ACTUAL PHOTOGRAPHED REPRODUCTION AS I



APPEAR IN THE FLESH... READ MY COLUMN, THE GRAY-ZEPPED'S JOURNAL! IN THIS ISSUE! AND NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THAT BAW, THE OLD WITCH!

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!



HMPH! NOW THAT YOU HAVE BEEN DULY BORED BY THE GHOST-KEEPER'S FAINT TALE, I'LL TELL YOU A HORROR STORY! COME CLOSER AND GAZE INTO THE SIZZLING CONTENTS OF MY CAULDRON! GAZE DEEP AND SOON YOU'LL SEE THE FIRST SCENE OF A CHILLING TALE I CALL...

## THE LIVING DEATH!

LESTER JEROME AND ARNOLD WANNING HAD BEEN CLOSE FRIENDS ALL THROUGH THE YEARS AT MEDICAL SCHOOL. THEY HAD STUDIED TOGETHER AND GRADUATED TOGETHER! THEY HAD EVEN INFORMED TOGETHER AT THE SAME HOSPITAL! THEY HAD DONE EVERYTHING TOGETHER! AND, TOGETHER, THEY HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH THE SAME GIRL.



EVEN LAUREL WAKE UP YOUR WHIP! LESTER OR ME?

WHY NOT BOTH OF YOU?

SAY THAT'S NOT A BAD IDEA! WE'LL BOTH TAKE HER TO THE MOVIES, ARNOLD!

YES! LESTER AND ARNOLD HAD BEGUN THEIR MEDICAL CAREERS TOGETHER! BUT SOON, THEY BEGAN TO DRIFT APART! THEY BEGAN TO DIFFER ON THEORIES OF MEDICINE.



I SAY THAT THE MAJORITY OF ILLNESSES ARE NOTHING BUT PRODUCTS OF THE MIND! THEY ARE PSYCHOLOGICALLY INCURRED!

SAH! LESTER, YOU'RE MAD! AN ILLNESS IS AN ILLNESS AND SHOULD BE TREATED AS SUCH!

AND DO LESTER JEROME AND ARNOLD MANNING CAME TO A CROSSROADS AND EACH WENT IN A DIFFERENT DIRECTION! LESTER TOOK THE PATH OF PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE... THE TREATMENT OF ILLNESSES THROUGH THE MIND, WHILE ARNOLD TOOK THE PATH OF SURGERY... THE TREATMENT OF ILLNESSES BY SCALPEL, NEEDLE, AND PILL!... THE GIRL THEY BOTH LOVED... STOOD BETWEEN THEM, TRYING TO MAKE UP HER MIND!



LAURIE AND LESTER BECAME ENGAGED THE MONTHS WENT BY AND THE WEDDING DAY DREW NEAR! ABOUT A WEEK BEFORE THE EVENTUAL DAY LAURIE BECAME VERY SICK! SHE WAS RUINED TO THE HOSPITAL...

HERE, LESTER! HERE ARE THE X-RAYS! LOOK FOR YOURSELF! SHE HAS A TUMOROUS GROWTH ON HER HEART! AN OPERATION MIGHT SAVE HER LIFE!

NIGHT, YOU SAY? WHAT ARE HER CHANCES, ARNOLD?



THEN, ONE DAY, ARNOLD MANNING, THE SURGEON, RECEIVED A PHONE CALL FROM LAURIE! HE WENT TO SEE HER... I... I DON'T KNOW TO SAY I FEEL WELL... I HOPE YOU'LL BOTH BE VERY HAPPY TOGETHER! LESTER HAS ASKED ME TO MARRY HIM, AND I'VE ACCEPTED! I'M... GLAD!



I... I CAN'T TELL, LESTER! MAYBE ONE CHANCE IN TEN! IT'S A VERY DELICATE OPERATION!

THEN I WON'T ALLOW YOU TO PERFORM IT! I'LL SAVE HER THROUGH PSYCHOSOMATIC MEDICINE BY MYSELF! I'M SURE I CAN!



DON'T BE A FOOL, LESTER! SURGERY IS THE ONLY WAY! YOU CAN'T STOP A TUMOR THROUGH PSYCHOLOGY!

YES! IT'S POSSIBLE BY HYPNOTISM I'LL REMOVE IT! AFTER ALL... GROWTH IS CONTROLLED BY THE BRAIN!



I'M IN CHARGE HERE, DOCTOR JEROME! THERE'S NO TIME FOR YOUR PSYCHOSOMATIC HOOD-WADD! LAURIE'S LIFE IS AT STAKE.

BUT YOU ADMITTED THAT SHE DOESN'T HAVE MUCH OF A CHANCE!



YES! BUT THERE'S STILL THAT CHANCE! I'M ORDERING THE OPERATION! I SHALL PERFORM IT MYSELF!

NO! GIVE ME A TRY! PLEASE!



BUT LESTER DIDN'T GET HIS CHANCE! THE HOSPITAL BOARD VOTED HIM DOWN, AND DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING PERFORMED THE OPERATION! HE DID HIS BEST, BUT



THE ONE WHO DIED, LESTER?

OH I DON'T KNOW! NO!

I COULD HAVE SAVED HER! I COULD HAVE SAVED HER IF YOU HAD GIVEN ME THE CHANCE! YOU KILLED HER, MANNING! YOU AND YOUR SURGERY!



...I DID ALL I COULD, LESTER!

AND? YOU COULDN'T HAVE LISTENED TO ME! BUT NO! YOU'RE A SHAMELESS FOPHOBIC FIGHT! THAT'S ALL YOU KNOW!



WELL, I'LL SHOW YOU, DOCTOR MANNING! SOMEDAY, I'LL CONVINCE YOU THAT I WAS RIGHT!

MOMMY, DOCTOR JEROME! PERHAPS, BUT I DOUBT IT!



AND SO THE YEARS PASSED! DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING BECAME A WORLD FAMOUS SURGEON, WHILE DOCTOR LESTER JEROME REMAINED AN OSCURE FOPHOBIC... THE HYPERMAN!

DOO JEROME! I WOULDN'T GO TO HIM ON A JIFF! HE DON'T GIVE YOU PILLS OR NOTHING! JUST HYPNOTIZES YOU... PSYCHOANALYZES YOU!

THE BOY DAUGHT TO BE PSYCHO-ANALYZED HIMSELF! HE'S A HOT!



ONE DAY, WHILE DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING WAS PERFORMING A ROUTINE OPERATION...



DOCTOR MANNING! WHAT IS IT?

...EASER CAN'T SEE! EVERYTHING... IS BLURRED! TAKE OVER... DOCTOR...

DOCTOR MANNING SLUMPED TO THE FLOOR, UNCONSCIOUS! HIS ASSISTANT TOOK OVER WHILE THEY CARRIED DOCTOR MANNING OUT OF THE OPERATING ROOM TO A HOSPITAL BED.



NO PAIN DRUGS! GET HIM TO X-RAY... AT ONCE!

PUPILS DILATED.

DOCTOR! YOU MEAN...





YES? IT LOOKS LIKE  
A UFAIN TUMOR!

GIVE ME  
X-RAY!  
IMMEDIATELY!



SEVERAL HOURS LATER, DR. MARNIE  
SHOWN CONSCIOUSNESS? WHICH HE  
LOOKED AROUND.

YOU COLLAPSED  
WHILE OPERATING.  
DOCTOR? HOW DO  
YOU FEEL?

I HAVE A  
SEVERE HEAD-  
ACHE? WHAT  
WHAT'S AJOIN?  
WITH ME?



HERE, DOCTOR MARNIE  
DON'T LOOK AT THESE  
X-RAYS!

DEFERRED  
FUMORY?  
FUMORY, WERE  
PRESSURE THIS  
MAN IS... IS...  
NO!



YES, DOCTOR MARNIE! THERE  
ARE THREE X-RAYS!

BUT, WITH A TUMOR  
LIKE THAT, AN  
IMMEDIATE OPERATION  
IS IMPERATIVE ON  
BLUE...



DEATH IN TWO MONTHS AT  
THE MOST, DOCTOR MARNIE!

AND... ONE DANCE IN  
TEN THAT THE OPER-  
ATION WILL SAVE MY  
LIFE? AND... I'M THE  
ONLY MAN THAT CAN  
SUCCESSFULLY PER-  
FORM IT?



HIE, HIE! THAT'D BE SOME FRACK, EH, DEAR READER? HE'S RATHER  
HEP! ARNOLD CERTAINLY WAS IN A HORRIBLE PREDIC-  
AMENT.

DOCTOR MARNIE?  
WHAT ABOUT, DOCTOR  
JEROME? BE GLASS  
THAT A TUMOR GROWTH  
CAN BE CONTROLLED BY...

NO? HE'S A MAD DOCTOR!  
I... I'S RATHER GULP...



HIE, HIE! I'M GET HIM, DEAR READER? HE'S RATHER  
DUE? PRETTY STUBBORN WASN'T HE? WELL, HE  
CHANGED HIS MIND? DOCTOR MARNIE THOUGHT IT  
OVER REAL HARD...

WELL, WELL! THE FAMOUS SUR-  
GEON, DOCTOR ARNOLD MARNIE,  
AND TO WHAT DO I OWE THE  
EXTREME PLEASURE...

I... I'M HERE  
PROFESSIONALLY,  
DOCTOR JEROME!



DOCTOR ARNOLD MARRING LEFT DOCTOR JEROME'S OFFICE AND WALKED THOUGHTFULLY TOWARD HIS HOME AS HE CROSSED A BUSY INTERSECTION...



THEY PULLED ARNOLD FROM BENEATH THE CAR! THE FRONT WHEELS HAD ROLLED OVER HIM! HE WAS IN A COMA...



THE SAIL OF THE AMBULANCE SWIRL SCREAMED THROUGH THE CITY AS ARNOLD MARRING WAS CARRIED TO THE HOSPITAL...



A HASTY EXAMINATION FOLLOWED...



WHEN DOCTOR MANNING DID NOT RETURN TO DOCTOR JEROME'S OFFICE IN TWO DAYS, LESTER INQUIRED AT THE HOSPITAL AND LEARNED ABOUT THE ACCIDENT...

AND ALTHOUGH HE IS DEAD, HE MOVES... AROUND? HE DOES NOT DEAD?

GENTLEMEN! I CAN EXPLAIN...

DOCTOR MANNING CAME TO MEY HE ASKED ME TO CARRY A TUMOR BY HYPNOTISM! I PUT HIM IN A TRANCE AND ASSURED HIM THAT HE WOULD NOT DIE WHILE IN THIS HYPNOTIC STATE! SO... HE CANNOT DIE UNTIL I RELEASE HIM! NOW WILL HE DELAY ON TAKE ON ANY OF DEATH'S CHARACTERISTICS?

POPPY-DOCK! POOLISH-NESS!

RECALCULAT!

OH! YOU DOUBT ME? THEN FOD! FIGURE IT OUT! GENTLEMEN! GOOD DAY!

A MONTH WENT BY! THEN TWO MONTHS! DOCTOR ARNOLD MANNING REMAINED IN THE SAME CONDITION! THEN ONE DAY, THE HOSPITAL SUMMONED DOCTOR LESTER JEROME...

YESTERDAY, DOCTOR MANNING REMAINED COMEOLU-NESS! HE M-HAYED AND FOUND THAT HIS CEREBRAL TUMOR HAS ALMOST ENTIRELY DISAPPEARED! HIS HEART STILL DOES NOT BEAT! HE ASKED FOR YOU! HE IS IN TERRIFIED FEAR!

GOOD! TAKE ME TO HIM!

DOCTOR LESTER JEROME SMILED AT THE WITHING! ARNOLD MANNING...

HELP... ME... LESTER? THE... MAN... MY... HEART... DO... SOMETHING! THEY... TELL ME... THAT... BY ALL... MEDICAL STAND-ARDS... I AM... DEAD!

YES, ARNOLD! YOU'VE BEEN DEAD FOR ALMOST THREE MONTHS! I'VE KEPT YOU FROM DECAYING THROUGH HYPNOSIS! YOUR TUMOR IS GONE, TOO! YOU SEE... I COULD HAVE SAVED LADYME... I... WHAT... THE...

DOCTOR LESTER JEROME HAD UTTERED THE WORD 'LADYME', THE WORD THAT WOULD RELEASE ARNOLD MANNING FROM HIS HYPNOTIC TRANCE! AS THE GATHERED DOCTORS WATCHED, HORRIFIED, ARNOLD FELL BACK LIMPLY ON THE BED! HIS SKIN SHIVERED, AND TURNED FROM PINK TO BLUE TO A SICKENING BROWN! HIS EYES SUNK DEEP INTO HIS HEAD! THEN THEY BECAME HOLLOW BLACK SOCKETS! THE FLESH... ROTTED AND SPRINKLE, FELL FROM HIS BONES! SOON, THE BED WAS COVERED WITH NOTHING BUT A BERTHING, GLOOMING MASS OF PUTRID AND DECAYED FLESH...

MEH... HERE! TO ARNOLD FINALLY GASTRAT OF WITH HIMSELF! WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIMSELF, ANYWAY? WELL... HOW LONG CAN A DEAD MAN FIGHT OFF DECAY, OH! IT'S SOUND TO MEAF YOU SOWAY SOONER OR LATER! OF COURSE WITH ARNOLD IT HAD TO MAKE UP FOR LOST TIME! TOO! HAD ARNOLD DIDN'T LISTEN TO LESTER, ANYWAY? MAYBE HE WOULDN'T HAVE HAD SUCH A MASS OF HIMSELF TOVE, NOW! I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THAT PURVEYER OF FARTY TALK... THE HAULT-KEEPER!

OH, IS THE WIT? IF YOU WANT A PHOTO OF ME IN THE FLESH, READ THE CRIFT-KEEPER'S COMMENT!



# CURSE!

He patted the gun-holster at his side; it reassured him and he pressed on through the matted undergrowth of the jungle. It couldn't be much farther, he reflected . . . according to the map the site was a mile east of the River of Doom.

Imagine those idiots, back in Port Au Prince, he chuckled, as he hacked his way forward. Isn't it just like these Haitians . . . falling for every Voodoo story they hear! They're positive that a fortune in jewels is hidden in this crumbling dump, yet no one has the guts to trek through the jungle after it, just because there's supposed to be a deadly curse on the house where the stuff is hidden! He patted the heavy revolver at his side once again. His gun would take care of any curse careless enough to try to keep him from getting his hands on that treasure! Let the Haitians beware of the curse they dreaded . . . the gun at his hip made him safe from this outlandish Voodoo superstition!

The clearing opened with unexpected suddenness in front of him, and under the dripping centuries-old trees he saw the dilapidated house they had described to him. It was ghostly, with that vapor seeming to rise from its sides; he thought, moving cautiously toward the sagging front door and into the dank building. He froze in his tracks immediately. Someone was seated in a chair in the center of the floor, staring off into the murkiness of the room. Quietly, taking great pains not to make a sound,

he drew the revolver from its holster, took aim and fired, at point-blank range.

Three shots rang out, and he smiled grimly as he moved toward the crumbling cabinets along one of the walls. He wasn't considered a dead-shot for nothing! He hadn't expected to find anybody sitting here and guarding that fortune in jewels . . . but he had taken care of whoever it was, anyway! The curse be damned!

The cabinets were full of sparkling jewels . . . there was a king's ransom tucked away in this hovel, his lot the taking! Suddenly the floor creaked behind him and he whirled, his hand gripping the revolver. The chair in which he had left his victim . . . it was empty! And by the glittering light of the gems he could see that there was no pool of blood where there should have been one! His head moved slightly as he slipped the safety catch on his revolver and he saw approaching . . . slowly, ominously, as if there was all eternity to accomplish its task . . . a being with the bloodless look of something long dead! Twice he fired the gun, almost convulsively . . . and still the creature kept advancing, never wavering, never altering its funereal pace!

In the next instant the truth burst in upon him in a wave of panic. This curse he had heard whispered about at Port Au Prince . . . it was one of the *Walking Dead*! THAT was why no one would accompany him on his trek . . . they knew that bullets were pathetically useless against one of the dreaded creatures!

And now the curse was reaching out and touching him, and a chill such as he had never before felt was moving down his body. It was all over, he knew, in his last moment of consciousness! He had been claimed, body and soul, by a *ZOMBIE*!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!



HELLO, AGAIN, YOU LITTLE MONSTERS! I GUESS YOU'VE BEEN EXPECTANTLY WAITING FOR THIS LATEST TALE FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION OF HORROR STORIES! WELL, HEH, HEH... I WON'T DISAPPOINT YOU! THIS TIME I'LL TELL YOU A TRULY ~~REPOLYFIFY~~ YARN, SO SET A STRONG HOLD ON YOUR STOMACH! HEH! I CALL IT

## MIDNIGHT SNACK!



SCENE: THE HOME OF DUNCAN REYNOLDS! TIME: MIDNIGHT!







YES, SIR? WHAT'LL IT BE?

...LET'S SEE! I'LL HAVE ER... I'LL...

**SMPP!** **SMPP!**  
"HEN!" WHAT A SICKENING GOON!



...SIZZLING HAMBURGERS! THAT, THAT BACON FRYING! I'M... I'M SO HUNGRY! SO HUNGRY, AND YET... THE SMELL OF FOOD COOKING MAKES ME **ILL!**



WELL, MISTER, WHAT'LL IT BE?

...CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! THAT COOKED MEAT IS... MAKING ME HANGOVER!



HEH! HEH! POOR DUNCAN! HE WANTS SO MUCH TO EAT SOMETHING... ONLY HE DOESN'T KNOW WHAT IT IS THAT HE **WANTS!** ANYWAY, HE STUMBLES OUT INTO THE STREET AND SPENDS SEVERAL MINUTES THERE, REGAINING HIS COMPOURE...



...EVERYTHING SEEMS SO **DOODERED** TONIGHT? I... I **DOUNT** TO GO HOME, BUT SOMETHING... SOMETHING WON'T LET ME! I... CAN'T CONTROL MYSELF.



(DIA-AGH!) JUST THE THOUGHT OF THAT **DOODED** FOOD SICKENS ME! **HEN!** NEVER HAPPENED TO ME **BEFORE!** HMPF! LAST TIME I'LL EVER GO INTO **JNMF** RESTAUR...



...GEE? I... I FEEL... **DIZZY!** AWFULLY **DIZZY!** FEEL LIKE I'M... GOING TO PASS OUT...



B. BLACKNESS CLOUDS HIS EYES AND MIND! HE FEELS HIMSELF FLOATING IN A WHIRLING VOID... AND THEN, SUDDENLY, IT IS OVER...



AGAINST HIS WILL, HE ENTERS THE COMETERY AND GOES FROM ONE GRAVE TO ANOTHER...



BEWILDERED, AND DRIVEN BY  
A FURY HE CANNOT RESIST,  
DUNCAN AGAIN AND AGAIN DIGS  
DEEPER INTO THE EARTH!



FINALLY THE COFFIN IS SAVED,  
THE LID RAISED...



SUDDENLY, A SPARK OF REALIZATION SEEPS  
INTO HIS CONSCIOUSNESS... A REALIZATION OF  
WHAT HE IS ABOUT TO DO!



OH, PLEASE! PLEASE! DON'T MAKE  
ME DO IT! BUT... BUT I... MAKE TO  
SOMETHING'S FORGIVE ME FO... OH-H  
I... I FEEL... GUESS AGAIN...



HEH, HEH! AGAIN THE EMPTY TERRIFYING BLACK-  
NESS SURROUNDS HIM, AND WHEN HE REGAINS  
CONSCIOUSNESS...

WHA...WHAT? MUST  
HAVE PASSED OUT AGAIN? I...I FEEL SO  
STRANGE! I...GOOD LORD! THE...THE CORPSE!  
WHAT HAVE I DONE?!



HE STARES, HORRIFIED, AT THE MUTILATED,  
PARTIALLY DEVoured BODY BEFORE HIM...

L. I ~~TRIED~~ NOT TO DO IT! I ~~TRIED~~! BUT  
THE CRAVING WAS TOO  
STRONG! I...WHAT'S  
THAT NOISE?



PEOPLE! A CROWD OF  
PEOPLE... WITH TORCHES!  
THEY'RE AFTER ME...  
GOING THIS WAY!



THEY WANT TO TAKE AWAY MY  
FOOD! BUT I WON'T LET  
THEM! I'LL RUN AWAY  
WITH IT!



THEY'VE SEEN ME!...HAVE TO  
RUN FASTER! I'LL HIDE MY  
FOOD! MUSTN'T LET THEM  
CATCH ME!



TIRING UNDER THE CORPSE'S WEIGHT AS HE  
DODGES AND WEIGHS THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD,  
DUNCAN SUDDENLY TRIPS...AND FALLS!



AN ETERNITY SEEMS TO PASS, BUT FINALLY HIS  
ARM QUIVERS... HIS EYES FLICKER AND OPEN...

WHE. I'M BACK HOME! WHERE...WHERE'S  
THE GRAVEYARD...THE CORPSE? OH...I...I  
GET IT NOW! HUH! I'VE BEEN HERE ALL THE  
TIME! MUST HAVE FALLEN ASLEEP!  
I'VE ONLY BEEN DREAMING!





It was a diabolical plot! Ralph was sure  
Cora would be...

# SCARED TO DEATH!



CORA CLUTCHED HER SHAWL TIGHTLY AROUND HER  
THROAT AND STARED HORRIFIED INTO THE DARKNESS  
OF THE HALLWAY OUTSIDE HER ROOM! RALPH, HER  
HUSBAND, GRAPED THE ARM OF HER WHEELCHAIR,  
STUDYING HER...

NO! NO, RALPH! I  
WON'T BELIEVE IT!

HE... HE'S COMING, CORA!  
YOUR UNCLE'S COMING  
FOR US!



CORA'S FACE WAS WET WITH PERSPIRATION! HER HAND  
TREMBLED... THE SHAWLS WHITENED... AS SHE DROVE  
HER SHAWL PROTECTIVELY ABOUT HER! RALPH SMILED  
SLIGHTLY AS HE WATCHED HER REACTION! IT WAS  
GOING TO WORK! IT HAD TO!

STOP IT, RALPH!  
STOP IT...

LISTEN, CORA! LISTEN! HE  
FOOTSTEPS... ON THE STAIRS!  
HE'S COMING TO AVENGE HIS  
MURDER!



TEARS FILLED CORA'S EYES! THEY SPILLED OVER THE RIM OF HER EYELIDS AND RAN CRABBY DOWN HER CHEEKS! SHE BEGAN TO SOB... HEAVENS! SOON THAT WACKED HER BODY AND SHIFTED HER WHEELCHAIR.



REMEMBER, CORA? REMEMBER THE NIGHT WE KILLED HIM?

CORA GASPED! RALPH CHUCKLED TO HIMSELF! POOR CORA! ONE MORE HEART ATTACK WILL SURELY KILL HER! THE DOCTOR HAD TOLD RALPH...



REMEMBER, CORA? WE DID IT... FOR HIS MONEY?

P. PLEASE, RALPH! SOB... SOB, PLEASE DON'T...

AS RALPH WATCHED CORA, HIS THOUGHTS WENT BACK... BACK OVER THE LONG MONTHS TO THE BEGINNING! IT HAD ALL STARTED AT A COCKTAIL PARTY GIVEN BY HER UNCLE IN CORA'S HONOR...



REALLY, FRANK? I FEEL TERRIBLE ABOUT THIS! GOING TO A PARTY WITHOUT AN INVITATION!

FORGET IT, RALPH! CORA'S UNCLE SHOULDN'T KNOW YOU WERE VISITING ME!



YES, BUT...

SHHHH! HERE HE COMES NOW!

AM, FRANK? GLAD YOU CAME! WHO'S YOUR FRIEND?



OH, THIS IS RALPH WEATHERBERRY'S FROM NEW YORK! I TOOK THE LIBERTY OF BRINGING HIM ALONG TO YOUR NIECE'S PARTY! I HOPE YOU DON'T MIND!

NOWHERE! HOW DO YOU DO, RALPH? I'M CORA'S UNCLE, ALEX WEATHERBERRY! GLAD TO HAVE YOU!

RALPH SMILED TO HIMSELF AS HE WATCHED CORA SCURRY IN HER WHEELCHAIR! YES! THAT WAS WHEN HE HAD FIRST MET HER.



HEY, FRANK? WHO'S THE PRETTY ONE!

THAT'S YOUR HOSTESS, CORA WEATHERBERRY! SHE SETS ALL THIS UP WHEN THE OLD GEEZER ORGANIZES SOLE HEIR.

SOLE HEIR? ALL OF ALEX WEATHERBERRY'S WEALTH WOULD BE CORA'S SOME DAY! SUDDENLY IT HAD COME TO RALPH... THE WHOLE PLAN...



WELL, FRANK? YOU'RE SOME FAL! AIN'T YOU GOING TO INTRODUCE ME?

OH, YEAH! SURE, RALPH! 'GONNA CORA...

THERE WAS A HORSE BELOW? CORA JUMPED, SAYING FOR BREATH! RALPH CROSSED HER. HER ORAL-WHITE SKIN. HER WRINKLED FOREHEAD! SHE WASN'T PRETTY NOT ANYMORE! NOT AS SHE HAD BEEN WHEN HE HAD FIRST ASKED...

WILL YOU MARRY ME, CORA? I KNOW WE'VE ONLY KNOWN EACH OTHER A SHORT TIME, YET.

OH, RALPH! DO YOU REALLY WANT ME?

AGAIN RALPH LAUGHED SILENTLY! CORA... ADMITS THE PUSHERY! LIKE NOW... CRIMSON... SNAKING! THE BILLY BOO! HE HAD WANTED HER UNCLE'S MONEY... NOT HER...

THEN, YOU... YOU'LL SAY YES?

OF COURSE, DARLING! OF COURSE I'LL MARRY YOU!



NOT THAT CORA HAD BEEN SO BAD TO LOOK AT BACK THEN! YES! TO RALPH, EXPERIENCED, WORLDLY, SURE... THE MONEY HAD SEEMED SO MUCH MORE ATTRACTIVE.

THE WIND OUTSIDE CORA'S BED-ROOM WHISTLED THROUGH THE TREES! ANOTHER NOISE... ANOTHER GASP! RALPH ENCLOSED HER CLOSELY. SHE WAS BREATHING HEAVEN, NOW... PAINFULLY.

AND THEN THE WEDDING! RALPH ESPECIALLY REMEMBERED THE WEDDING! NOW HE HAD SLIPPED THE RING ON HER FINGER, SAYING THE WORDS... BUT THINKING...



WHAT WAS THAT, CORA? NO, SHE ANOTHER FOOTSTEP. I WANT... ON THE STAIRS... IT CAN'T BE...



AH, THE NIGHTMOON! THE DRIVE TO EUROPE... ON THE OLD MAN'S MONEY...

AND THEN THOSE HOTTER MONTHS AT THE PLANT! WORKING, LIKE ANY OTHER LABORER, IN THE OLD MAN'S PLANT...



WHAT A BEAUTIFUL MOON TONIGHT! LOVE ME, DARLING!

WITH ALL MY HEART, CORA!

NOT TO MARRY AT THE BOTTOM, SOME SOMEDAY THIS PLANT WILL BE CORA'S... AND YOU'LL HAVE TO RUN IT

OF COURSE, UNCLE ALEX! I UNDERSTAND I WANT TO LEARN

WANTED IT! RALPH HAD ASKED IT! HATED EVERY-  
THING ABOUT IT! AND THEN IT HAD COME TO HIM! THE  
PERFECT SOLUTION...



OF COURSE! WHAT A POOL, I'VE  
SEEN! NOW, WHY WAIT TILL  
THE OLD GEEKER DIES? WHY  
NOT... HELP HIM?

YES! THE NEXT FEW MONTHS HAD BEEN TOUGH  
ON RALPH! HE HAD HAD TO BE ON HIS TOES! CONVINING  
SOPH WASN'T EASY.

AND  
THEN, IN FRONT OF THE MEN,  
HE INSULTED ME... CALLED  
ME INCOMPETENT...  
A RUMORFELL!

OH, RALPH, DARLING!  
I'M SO SORRY!  
I'LL... I'LL SPEAK  
TO HIM.



IT HAD TAKEN PATIENCE... AND  
INGENUITY.

NO, SOPH! I'LL  
FIGHT MY OWN  
BATTLES!

I CAN'T UNDER-  
STAND HIS ACTIONS!  
I REALLY CAN'T!

HE HAD HAD TO USE CAREFUL  
THINGS... PSYCHOLOGY...

...CALLED ME A FOLD-  
SWITCH! ACCUSED ME  
OF MARRIAGE! FOR  
FOR YOUR INHERITANCE!

AND  
THE  
MATERIAL,  
OLD.

BEST! AND THEN HE SAID THAT HE'D  
CUT FORD OUT OF HIS WILL!

HE ACCUSED FORD OF  
THE SAME THING...  
THAT ALL FORD  
CARED ABOUT WAS  
HIS MONEY!

LET HIM!  
HE'S NOTHING  
BUT A BITTER  
UNFORTUNATE OLD  
SKINFLINT!



A PUSHOVER... THAT'S WHAT SOPH HAD ALWAYS BEEN!  
AT FIRST SHE HAD VIOLENTLY OBJECTED, BUT SOON...  
SHE HAD RELUCTANTLY AGREED.

WHY NOT? IT'S FORD'S MONEY,  
RIGHT? HE'S OLD! HE'S  
LIVED HIS LIFE! IT'LL  
BE EASY.

ALL RIGHT!  
ALL RIGHT!  
WE'LL KILL  
HIM!



AND SO, ONE NIGHT, AN OLD UNCLE ALEX WERTHORN  
HAD BEEN STROLLING NEAR THE POND ON HIS VAST  
ESTATE...



THEY HAD PUT HIM, UNCONSCIOUS,  
PAGE DOWN IN THE POND.

IT'LL LOOK LIKE  
HE FELL STRUCK  
HIS HEAD AND  
DROWNED!

OH, RALPH! I,  
BOB, I'M  
AFRAID!

LATER THAT NIGHT THEY HAD  
CALLED THE POLICE

YES! HE WENT OUT  
ABOUT THREE HOURS  
AGO... AND HANRY  
COME BACK!

THE POLICE HAD COME... HAD  
SEARCHED THE GROUNDS... AND  
FOUND HIM...

POOR OLD BINK!  
'CLIPPED AND  
FELL... GUESSES!

WELL, LET'S GET  
HIM INSIDE!



YES, THEY'D GOTTEN AWAY WITH IT! CORA INHERITED THE  
MONEY BUT SOMETHING HAD HAPPENED TO HER! PERHAPS  
IT WAS HER CONSCIENCE BOYDING HER! ANYWAY SHE'D  
BEGIN TO BROOD. LOOK WHO!... AND RAPIDLY

CORA! YOU'VE BEEN LOOKING  
TERRIBLE, LATELY! YOU'VE GOT  
TO FORGET ABOUT IT, DO  
YOU HEAR?

I CAN'T, RALPH!  
(BOB) I, CAN'T!



SHE HAD DROWN HERSELF... FRIGHTENED! SHE'D JUMP  
AT EVERY SOUND! THEN SHE'D HAD HER HEART ATTACK...

SHE'S A SICK WOMAN, RALPH!  
ANOTHER ATTACK WILL  
SURELY KILL HER! SHE  
MUST TAKE IT VERY  
EASY...

I UNDERSTAND, BOOTH!



AND SO THE IDEA HAD COME TO RALPH! WITH CORA  
DEAD, THE WEATHERY FORTUNE WOULD BE HIS...  
ALL OF IT! AND CORA WOULD BE A PIONEER...

GOOD LORD!

WHAT? WHAT IS IT,  
RALPH?



I... I THOUGHT I SAW HIS FACE...  
UNCLE ALEX'S FACE... STARRING  
AT US! THROUGH THE WINDOW!

NO! YOU'RE JOKING...  
BOB... WITH ME!





THE WIND FLANNED A SHUTTER  
DOWNSTAIRS AND RALPH SHRIEKED  
OUT OF HIS REVERIE! CORA, STILL  
TREMBLING, WAS STARING INTO THE  
DARKENED HALLWAY...

WHAT WAS THAT?  
ANOTHER FOOTSTEP?

NO-NO!  
I.E...



RALPH SMILED! THIS NIGHT...THE  
WIND...EVERYTHING HAD BEEN PER-  
FECT! 'I SHOULD HAVE BEEN AN  
ACTOR,' HE THOUGHT! ANY MOMENT  
NOW...ANY MOMENT HER FOUNDRING  
HEART WOULD FAIL...

HE'S COMING, CORA!  
DON'T YOU HEAR HIM?

YES...  
I...



SUDDENLY HER EYES SEEMED TO  
POP OUT OF HER HEAD! RALPH  
WHISTLED! 'THIS IS IT, CORA! HE  
THOUGHT! SHE HEAVED A FINAL  
WRETCHING SIGH AND DOUBLED UP...

CORA!



RALPH BENT OVER HER! SHE WAS DEAD...

POOR  
CORA!  
POOR...POOR  
CORA!



IT CAME THROUGH THE DOOR! IT WAS BENT OVER...  
LIKE AN OLD MAN...



SUDDENLY THERE WAS A SOUND IN THE DARKENED  
HALLWAY...

WHAT WAS  
THAT?

CREAK



THE STENCH OF GRAVE-MOUNDS FILLED THE ROOM...

KEEP AWAY!  
KEEP AWAY  
FROM ME!



THE THING REACHED OUT ITS ROT-  
TED ARM FOR RALPH... MOVING  
TOWARD HIM...



THE CLOTHING HUNG IN SHREDS  
FROM ITS MASSOT-COVERED LIMBS!  
RALPH CLAWED AT ITS FACE AND  
PIECES OF DEAD-FOUL-SMELLING  
FLESH CAME OFF IN HIS HANDS...



IT LIFTED HIM IN A VICE-LIKE GRIP  
AND CARRIED HIM DOWN THE STAIRS!  
THE OOR OF DECAY BURNED RALPH'S  
NOSTRILS AS HE STRUGGLED FOR  
AIR...



THE THING WAS STRONG! IT HELD HIM FAST! IT STUM-  
BLED OUT ACROSS THE WELL-KEPT LAWNS AND DOWN  
THE BLADE TO THE POND! RALPH BEGAN TO SCREAM...



IT STEPPED INTO THE POND... LEADING OUT TO THE  
MIDDLE! THE POND BOTTOM WAS SOFT OUT THERE...  
LIKE SUPERGLUE! RALPH'S SCREAMING WAS WILD...  
ALMOST ANIMAL... LIKE...



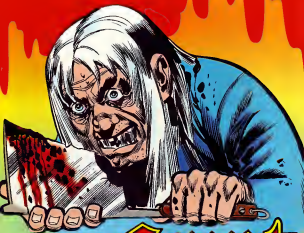
THE THING STOOD ARISE... THERE IN THE CENTER OF  
THE POND... CLUTCHING THE STRUGGLING RALPH! SLOWLY,  
THEY BEGAN TO SINK... DEEPER AND DEEPER INTO THE  
SOFT MUD...



DOWN...DOWN...UNTIL ONLY RALPH'S UPSTRETCHED  
HAND REMAINED ABOVE THE SURFACE...



AND THEN... EVEN THAT DISAPPEARED INTO THE MUD!



# The Crypt Keeper



Horror

OBJECTIONABLE 1950s EC COMICS!



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CANADA

# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE VAULT-KEEPER

SINCE HENRI'S MYSTERIOUS  
DISAPPEARANCE, I'VE HAD TO WORK  
LATE EVERY NIGHT AND... GOOD  
LORD! THIS ISN'T WAR! THIS  
IS A HUMAN HAND!

MATTHEW WAXWORKS



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CRYPT #1



CRYPT #2



CRYPT #3



CRYPT #4



CRYPT #5



CRYPT #6



SCI #1



SCI #2



SCI #3



SCI #4



SCI #5



SCI #6



SHOCK #1



SHOCK #2



SHOCK #3



SHOCK #4



SHOCK #5



SHOCK #6

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELL? HEH, HEH? I SEE YOU MANAGED TO SCOURGE UP COLD CASH FOR THIS COPY OF THE CRYPT OF TERROR! GOOD! DON'T WORRY! YOU WON'T BE SORRY! YOU'LL GET MORE THAN YOUR MONEY'S WORTH OF THRILLS! I'LL SEE TO IT! HEH! IT'S ME AGAIN! YOUR HOST IN HORROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER! WELCOME ONCE MORE TO MY HOME...THE CRYPT OF TERROR! FOR MY FIRST OFFERING TO SUCKLE YOUR BLOOD, I HAVE CHOSEN ONE OF MY BEST TERROR TALES FROM MY VAST COLLECTION OF SPINE-TINGLERS HERE IN THE CRYPT! THIS IS THE STORY OF CLYDE FRANKLIN, THE RENOWNED ANIMAL HUNTER! REMEMBER HIM? REMEMBER WHEN HE DISAPPEARED? WELL, I FOUND HIM...OR WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM! THIS IS HIS STORY...AS HE TOLD IT TO ME...IN HIS VERY WORDS! CLYDE SARCASTICALLY CALLS IT...

## THE TROPHY!



YES, I'M CLYDE FRANKLIN! MY STORY BEGINS ONE NIGHT IN MY LUXURIOUS HOME! IT WAS THE NIGHT BEFORE I WAS TO LEAVE ON ANOTHER OF MY HUNTING EXPEDITIONS! A REPORTER FROM THE 'MORNING GLOBE' HAD DROPPED IN TO INTERVIEW ME! I FOUND HIM WAITING FOR ME IN THE TROPHY ROOM! HE STARED AT THE HEAD-LINED WALLS WIDE-EYED...

AND I SEE YOU  
HAVE DISCOVERED  
MY TROPHY ROOM!

OH? MR. FRANKLIN?  
YOU STARTLED ME!

I HAD TO KEEP MYSELF FROM LAUGHING! THE REPORTER WAS PALE AS A SHEET...

DON'T YOU LIKE MY SCAVENGER?



THEY... THEY'RE GREAT-SOME! SOME OF THEM LOOK SO ALIVE!

OH, COME NOW, SIR? THESE ARE MEMENTOS OF MY PAST HUNTING TRIPS! THEY'RE... MY... MY RECORDS OF ACHIEVEMENT!



HOW COULD YOU?

HOW COULD YOU MURDER THESE POOR CREATURES... KILL THEM... THEN STUFF THEIR HEADS AND HAVE THEM HERE! IT'S CRUEL!



NOW! NOW! BE REASONABLE, SIR! I WANT FOR THE PURE SPORT OF IT! THESE ARE MY... MY BOONES! LIKE TOUCHDOWN... IN FOOTBALL! SURELY YOU CANNOT DENY A MAN HIS SPORT?



SPORT IS IT? IT'S MURDER! THESE POOR CREATURES ONCE LIVED... LIKE YOU OR IF YOU MURDERED THEM!

...I THINK THIS INTERVIEW IS AT AN END, YOUR NAME? GOOD-EVENING!



GOOD NIGHT!

THE YOUNG REPORTER STORMED OUT OF MY TROPHY ROOM... STAMPED ACROSS THE MARBLE HALL... WHISKED HIS HAT OFF THE BACK... OPENED THE HUGE OAK DOOR... AND BLAMMED IT HARD! I BEGAN TO LAUGH...



POOR FOOL! HAH, HAH! WHAT'S HE SO WORKED UP ABOUT AFTER ALL THEY'RE ONLY ANIMALS!

THE NEXT MORNING, I WAS UP AT DAWN! AFTER A HEAVY BREAKFAST, I PACKED THE LAST REMAINING NECESSITIES INTO MY STATION WAGON AND SAID GOOD-BYE TO MY SERVANTS...



GOOD-BYE, JEEVES! I'LL BRING A MOOSE-HEAD JUST FOR YOU!

GOOD-BYE, SIR! GOOD LUCK!

MY TRIP THIS TIME WAS TO TAKE ME UP THE ALASKAN HIGHWAY IN SEARCH OF CARIBOU, PUMA, MOOSE, OR ANY OTHER UNFORTUNATE ANIMAL THAT MIGHT CROSS MY PATH.

AFTER APRICA AND INDIA, THIS TRIP WILL BE *TANZANIA*!



JUST A FEW MILES OUT OF PRINCE GEORGE, CANADA, I MADE MY FIRST CAMP.

THERE DUGHT TO BE PLENTY OF MOOSE AND CARIBOU IN *TANZANIA*'S WOODS! I'LL TRY MY LUCK BRIGHT AND EARLY TOMORROW MORNING!



THE NEXT DAY, I TRACKED A MOOSE FOR THREE HOURS! FINALLY I CAUGHT UP WITH HIM! HE WAS STANDING IN THE SHALLOW WATERS OF A SMALL LAKE DRINKING HIS FILL.

LOOK AT THOSE *ANTLENS*! WHAT A TROPHY HE'LL MAKE!



HE TURNED TOWARD ME AND BELLOWED AS I CAME OUT IN THE OPEN! I RAISED MY GUN, SIGHTED CAREFULLY AND...



HE DROPPED TO HIS KNEES! HE SHOOKED HIMSELF! HIS BEADY EYES REDDED! HE STUMBLED TO HIS FEET AND CHARGED...



I STOOD MY GROUND! I RAISED MY GUN AGAIN! I WAITED UNTIL I KNEW I COULD HIT THE VITAL SPOT THEN I FIRED.



HE WENT DOWN AS THE BULLET STRUCK HIM! HE ROLLED OVER AND LAY DEAD AT MY FEET! HE WAS TREMENDOUS! HIS HEAD WAS GOING TO BE A WONDERFUL ADDITION TO MY TROPHY ROOM.



I UNSHEATHED MY KNIFE AND SET TO WORK.





WHEN I CAME TO, I WAS LYING ON A COUCH IN A MUSTY CARRIAGE! AS THE COB-WEIR CLEARED, I HEARD A STRANGE SOUND! IT WAS THE STEADY THROBBING OF A MOTOR COMING FROM THE NEXT ROOM...

WH... WHERE AM I? I... I REMEMBER! THE CRASH!



SUDDENLY, AS I LAY THERE, I HEARD VOICES COMING FROM THE ROOM WITH THE THROBBING MOTOR...

NOT PLEASE! DON'T! HAVE MERCY! HAAAAAH!



MY BLOOD FROZE IN MY VEINS! IT BOUNCED LIKE SOMEONE WAS BEING TORTURED...

WHAT IS BLAZING? I'VE GOT TO...

PLEASE... NO! AAAAAAH!



I TRIED TO MOVE! AN EXPLODING PAIN SHOT THROUGH MY LEG! I LOOKED DOWN! IT WAS TWISTED! IT WAS...

BROKEN! MY LEG IS BROKEN! I CAN'T MOVE!



SUDDENLY THE DOOR OPENED! FOR A MOMENT I HEARD THE MOTOR... LOUDER! AND THERE WAS ANOTHER SOUND... A GURGLING SOUND! LIKE WATER BEING PUMPED THROUGH PIPES...

ARE YOU'VE SOME SOUND?



HE CLOSED THE DOOR, SHUTTING OUT THE NOISES! HE SMILED AT ME...

HOW DO YOU FEEL? I WAS AFRAID YOU MIGHT HAVE A CONCUSSION!

FINE... EXCEPT FOR MY LEG! YOU TALK LIKE YOU KNOW SOMETHING ABOUT RESIDINE! WHY COULDN'T YOU PUT MY LEG IN A SPLINT?



I'M NOT INTERESTED IN YOUR LEG!

WHAT KIND OF A MAN ARE YOU WHO WHO HAVE YOU GOT IN THERE? IT SOUNDS LIKE YOU'RE TORTURING HIM!





YOU  
HEARD?

YES! LOOK... YOU'VE  
GOT TO GET MY  
LEG OR GET ME  
TO A DOCTOR!



YOU'RE NOT  
SOME JAP-  
ANESE! YOU'RE  
NOT... MY  
PRISONER!

THE SPINES!  
YOU PUT  
THEM ACROSS  
THE ROAD!



EXACTLY! LET US  
SAY I 'BANGED'  
YOU AS A HURTED  
BASTARD ANIMAL!

WHAT ARE  
YOU GOING  
TO DO  
WITH ME?



HE TURNED AND STARTED OUT THE  
DOOR—

YOU'LL SEE  
YOU'LL SEE!



I WATCHED HIM AS HE CROSSED THE CLEARING AND  
ENTERED WHAT APPEARED TO BE A WOODENED

WOOOAAAAH!



HE WAS OBVIOUSLY MAD! WHOEVER HE HAD IN THAT  
ROOM WITH THE DEASELESSLY THROBBING MOTOR WAS  
IN GREAT PAIN! I DECIDED TO TRY TO REACH THE DOOR  
TO SEE—

MY...LEG! IT'S...TELLING...ME!



WITH A GREAT DEAL OF EFFORT, I MANAGED TO HALF  
HOP, HALF DRAG MYSELF ACROSS THE ROOM TO THE  
DOOR! I PUNG IT OPEN...

WHY, THERE'S NO  
ONE HERE!

THE ROOM WAS EMPTY! ON A BARE, WHITE TABLE WAS A RATHER LARGE ROUND BOX! IT LOOKED LIKE A HAT BOX! ON THE FLOOR, A SMALL MOTOR THROBBED! IT SEEMED TO BE A PUMP ARRANGEMENT! FROM AN ATTACHED TANK SEVERAL RUBBER TUBES RAN OFF TOWARD THE TABLE...



OVER THE TABLE A BOTTLE HUNG UPSIDE DOWN! IT LOOKED LIKE THE KIND OF BOTTLE USED TO ADMINISTER PLASMA! A TUBE RAN FROM IT DOWN TO THE TABLE...



I GRABBED MYSELF, PAINFULLY, TO THE TABLE! I STARED DOWN AT THE STRANGE BOX! I SAW NOW THAT IT WAS ONLY A COVER! SUDDENLY THE HAIR ON THE BACK OF MY NECK CRABLED! ONCE AGAIN CAME THAT PERNETIC SIGH MOAN...



I GRABBED THE HANDLE AND RAISED THE COVER! THE MOST HORRIFYING SIGHT I HAVE EVER SEEN MET MY EYES! I SCREAMED...



THERE, ON THE TABLE, WAS A LIVING, BREATHING, HUMAN HEAD! IT GLINKED AT ME THROUGH WIDE EYES...



I STOOD ROOTED TO THE SPOT, UNABLE TO MOVE! THE INSURMOUNTABLE HORROR I FELT NUMBED MY SENSES...



SUDDENLY, THE HEAD'S WIDE STARING EYES LOOKED BEYOND ME! I SPUN AROUND...



YOUR TROPHY ROOM?

WALTER: THIS IS WHERE I WILL KEEP THE HEADS OF ALL OF MY GAME!



HE TURNED AND TOOK A CAN OFF A SHELF...

YOU'RE CRAZY! YOU CAN'T HUNT HIDDEN BEINGS!

WHY NOT? I HUNT THEM FOR THE PURE SPORT OF IT!



THEN HE REACHED FOR A SPONGE...

SPORT? IT'S A HUNTER!

CALL IT WHAT YOU WILL, IT'S MY IDEA OF SPORT!



HE CAME AT ME WITH THE CAN AND SPONGE! I TRIED TO GET AWAY, BUT MY BROKEN LEG WENT ME SPRAWLING! HE CLAPPED THE DAMP SPONGE OVER MY NOSE AND MOUTH, AND I SMELLED THE SICKENING PUNGENT OOR OF OILDRIPPON! I BEGAN TO LOSE CONSCIOUSNESS... DRIFTING OFF INTO A BLACK AMYD...

AFTER ALL... THEY'RE ONLY HUMAN BEINGS!



HE POINTED AT ME! THE MAN WITH HIM WAS OUT AND SMOKED AS IF HE HAD BEEN IN AN ACCIDENT...

... AND THIS IS MY LATEST MEMENTO... FROM A PAST HUNTING TRIP! SOON YOU TOO WILL BECOME ONE OF MY MEMOIRS OF ACHIEVEMENT!

GAFF!



WHEN THE DARKNESS Faded AND I CAME TO, I WAS STARING OUT OVER THE WHITE EXPANSE OF THE TABLE TOP! THE DOOR OPENED! HE CAME IN! HE HAD SOMEONE WITH HIM...

... BUT BEFORE YOU DIE, I WANT YOU TO SEE MY TROPHY ROOM!



HOLD UP! YES! THAT'S OLIVE FRANKLIN'S STORY. IN HIS OWN WORDS! THAT'S NOW HE TOLD IT TO ME WHEN I DROPPED IN TO SEE MY FRIEND WHO LIVES IN THE LITTLE CABIN NEAR THE ALASKAN HIGHWAY! YOU SHOULD SEE HIS TROPHY ROOM NOW! HE'S GETTING TO BE ONE THE HUNTER! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO MY FELLOW GHOULNATIC, THE RAGG-KEEPER, FOR SOME MORE SKULL-SURGERY!



THE END

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

I SEE IT'S "GOOD-BYE" TIME FOR ME AGAIN! TIME FOR ME TO TRACE THE PAGES OF THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S MAGAZINE WITH A HORROR TALE FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION OF SPINE-TINGLERS HERE IN THE VAULT OF HORROR! YES, I AM THE VAULT-KEEPER! COME IN AND LIE DOWN ON THAT STRETCHER-BACK OVER THERE! YOU'LL HAVE A SHOPPING GOOD TIME WITH THIS TALE OF THE MACABRE I AM ABOUT TO RELATE! I CALL IT...

**"JUDY, YOU'RE NOT YOURSELF TODAY!"**



DONALD ABELSON STOOD AT THE DOOR OF HIS LOVELY LITTLE HOME AND KISSED HIS WIFE GOOD-BYE! HE WAS LEAVING FOR THE OFFICE! HE LOOKED INTO HER SOFT EMBROIDERED AND WHISPERED THE WARNING HE HAD REGULARLY REPEATED EVERY MORNING SINCE THEY HAD BEEN MARRIED...

"GOOD-BYE, JUST BEAT! I'LL BE HOME AT THE USUAL TIME! REMEMBER, DON'T OPEN THE DOOR TO STRANGERS."

"I WON'T, DON! GOOD-BYE! DON'T WORRY TOO HARD!"



JUST ABELON WATCHED HER HUSBAND, DONALD, STROLL DOWN THE SMALL-TOWN STREET...



...FLAG HIS REGULAR MORNING BUS AS IT CAME TO THE CORNER...



...AND GET ABOARD? SHE WANTED HER USUAL FAREWELL KISS AFTER HIM AS THE BUS ROARED AWAY DOWN THE TREE-LINED STREET...



THEN SHE WENT INSIDE? SHE CLOSED THE DOOR AND SHAKED...

...POOR DARLING! HE WORRIES ABOUT ME SO! ALWAYS AFRAID SOMETHING MIGHT HAPPEN TO ME WHEN HE LEAVES ME ALONE EVERY DAY! I... OH, DEAR! SOMEONE'S AT THE DOOR...



JUDY OPENED THE DOOR AND PEERED OUT? ON THE STEPS STOOD A BEAT AND WHIMLED OLD LADY... HER HEAD COVERED WITH A RAGGED SHAWL! AS HER BEADY EYES CAUGHT SIGHT OF JUDY, SHE SHINNED A TOOTHLESS GRIN...

PLEASE... YOUNG LADY! HAVE PITY ON A POOR OLD WOMAN... WHO HASN'T EATEN IN TWO DAYS! SHARE A CRUST OF BREAD, OR A COIN... PLEASE!

I... I... WAIT A MOMENT, PLEASE!



JUDY HURRIED INTO THE KITCHEN AND GOT HER PURSE! AS SHE CAME BACK THROUGH THE HALL...

THE POOR WOMAN, HAVING TO KEEF FROM DOOR TO DOOR FOR A BITE TO EAT? I'LL JUST... BEEP...

YOU HAVE A LOVELY HOME, MA'AM! BUT BETTER STILL, YOU HAVE A LOVELY YOUNG BODY. JUST WHAT I'VE BEEN LOOKING FOR!



JUDY STARED INTO THE OLD WOMAN'S BLOODSHOT EYES! HER FINGERS CLUTCHED AT HER RACING HEART...

MY BODY? WHAT... WHAT DO YOU MEAN? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I AM AN OLD WOMAN, CHILD! MY BODY IS BEAT WITH AGE... ACHEING WITH THE PAIN OF TIRED BONES! I AM GOING TO TAKE YOUR BODY... AND GIVE YOU MORE! A FAIR EXCHANGE...



YOU...YOU'RE JOKING  
WITH ME? HERE...  
HERE'S A DOLLAR  
NOW, PLEASE GO!

NO, MY DEAR! I AM  
NOT JOKING! YOU ARE  
EXACTLY WHAT I'VE  
BEEN LOOKING FOR...



Suddenly everything went black!  
Judy felt herself falling...fall-  
ing...into the empty velvet black  
void of unconsciousness...

When she came to, she was  
lying on the floor...she stared  
down at the familiar man...then  
her gaze fell upon her hand!  
It was knobby...wrinkled...the  
hand of an old woman...



NOT ON, DEAR  
GOD, NO!



EEEEEEEEE

CAMPED-  
OUT-RAD-NO-  
VIBRANT! AHO-  
RABBIT-MORRIS!



Judy scrambled to her feet and  
stumbled to the mirror above  
the fire place! She looked...  
horrified...at the image she saw!  
It was the face of a beady-eyed,  
toothless, bent old lady...



Judy rushed to the telephone! Unbearable pains  
shot like needles through her shakled and  
crooked limbs...

COULD? THIS IS JUST? SOME  
MORE...SASP...GORGLE? SOMETHING...HORRIBLE  
HAS HAPPENED...



MEANWHILE, A THIN YOUNG PHRENE MOVED DOWN  
THE MAIN STREET OF THE SMALL TOWN...THE  
STOLEN BODY OF JUDY ABELSON...



HMM! SHE  
DIDN'T EVEN  
SAW HELLO!

FUNNY! SHE  
ACTED LIKE THE NEVER  
SASP US  
BEFORE!



FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, DONALD ABELSON RUST THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR OF HIS HOUSE...



JUDY? WHERE ARE YOU?

THE GRAYED OLD WOMAN RUSHED TO DONALD AND PLUNGED HER BONEY ARMS ABOUT HIS NECK...

OH, DONALD... BOB... DONALD? I AM YOUR WIFE!

WHAT IS BLAZED?



JUDY, NO LONGER POSSESSING HER YOUNG TRIM BODY, BUT THAT OF AN OLD WOMAN, BOBBED OUT THE W-HOLE STORY...

AND WHEN I REMAINED CONSCIOUSNESS, I FOUND MYSELF IN HER BODY! DONALD... BOB... WHAT WILL I DO? WHAT WILL I DO...?



SPRAWLED ON THE COUCH IN THE LIVING ROOM, DONALD FOUND A SOBBING OLD WOMAN...



WHAT ARE YOU DOING HERE? WHERE'S MY WIFE?

DONALD...

DONALD STIFLED THE FEELING OF NAUSEA THAT SWEEPED OVER HIM AS THE OLD CRONE KESSED HIS CHEEKS AND WEPT...

FOR GOD'S SAKE, OLD WOMAN! STOP YOUR WHIMPERING AND TELL ME... WHAT DID YOU DO WITH JUDY?

I AM JUDY... DONALD? BELIEVE ME! I AM...



DONALD LISTENED TO THE INCREDIBLE STORY! HE STARED AT THE OLD WOMAN IN DISBELIEF...

I DON'T BELIEVE YOU! I CAN'T... LET ME PROVE I AM JUDY, DONALD! ASK ME ANYTHING THAT ONLY JUDY WOULD KNOW!



DONALD THROTTLED AHH! HE THOUGHT FOR A MOMENT, AND THEN...

ALL RIGHT! IF YOU CAN ANSWER THIS... I WON'T BELIEVE YOU! WHAT WAS THE NUMBER OF THE ROOM IN THE HOTEL WHERE WE SPENT OUR HONEYMOON?



POP!

DONALD COULDN'T BELIEVE HIS EARS! HE ASKED OTHER QUESTIONS... SOME PERSONAL QUESTIONS! THE BENT OLD WOMAN ANSWERED THEM ALL... CORRECTLY...

HOW WILL YOU BELIEVE ME? IT'S HORRIBLE! HORRIBLE! WHY...



THE RINGING OF THE TELEPHONE INTERRUPTED DONALD'S EXCLAMATION...

HELLO? DON'T THIS IS GEORGE... DOWN AT THE STATION YOU AND YOUR WIFE HAVE A GUARREL, OLD BOY?



WHY... NO? WHAT MAKES YOU ASK?



SHE'S DOWN HERE! WAITIN' FOR THE THREE-TEN! BOUGHT A TICKET TO NEW YORK! WOULD I DON'T MEAN TO PAY, BUT...



DONALD HUNG UP! HE SPUN AROUND, FACING THE WRINKLED WOMAN...

YOU SAY YOU'RE JUDY? IF YOU ARE, YOU'LL FOLLOW MY INSTRUCTIONS... DO ANYTHING I WANT!



ANYTHING! ANYTHING!

DONALD LED THE OLD WOMAN TO A CLOSET! HE OPENED THE DOOR...

HURRY! THERE'S NO TIME TO LOSE! PERHAPS IT ISN'T TOO LATE! I HAVE A PLAN... BUT... I'VE GOT TO LOCK YOU IN THIS CLOSET! WILL YOU LET ME?

IF IT WILL HELP DONALD... OF COURSE!



DONALD CLOSED THE CLOSET DOOR ON THE OLD WOMAN AND LOCKED IT! HE POCKETED THE KEY AND RAN FROM THE HOUSE! HE CURSED THE TRAFFIC AS HE SPED DOWNTOWN IN HIS CAR...

SHE MUST BE JUDY... SHE MUST BE! NO ONE ELSE WOULD HAVE BEEN ABLE TO ANSWER THOSE QUESTIONS!



IT WAS THREE O'CLOCK WHEN DONALD REACHED THE STATION! HE SPOTTED JUDY'S FAMILIAR FIGURE SITTING IN THE WAITING ROOM! HE WALKED UP TO HER! SHE LOOKED AT HIM BLANKLY... WITHOUT RECOGNITION...

SHE DOESN'T KNOW ME? IT IS TRUE? IT IS TRUE? THIS IS JUDY? NO! BUT JUDY IS BACK HOME... IN THE OLD WOMAN'S BODY...



SUDDENLY, A DESPERATE MAD IDEA CRASHED INTO DONALD'S MIND! HE STEPPED UP TO JUDY'S BODY AND SMILED...



SO YOU'RE RUNNING AWAY, JUDY? SO YOU CAN'T FACE THE FACT THAT YOU HAVE **CANCER**... THAT YOU'RE GOING TO **DIE** IN TWO MONTHS?

WAS I **CANCER?** **DIE?**

**GO AHEAD! RUN AWAY!** YOU THINK YOU'LL **SPARE** ME THE **WRECK** OF WATCHING YOU **DIE** ENTIRELY RIGHT... IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU WANT IT...

**CANCER... DIE?** WHAT HAVE I DONE? I'VE GOT TO GET IT **BACK**... GET MY **BODY BACK**... I **CAN'T** GO TO **ANY** **PLACE**...



SUDDENLY JUDY'S BODY... HEATED ON THE BENCH... STIFFENED THEN. THE COLOR DRAINED FROM HER CHEEKS! SHE SLUMPED FORWARD...



JUDY! JUDY!

WHAT WHAT HAPPENED? WHERE AM I?

OH DONALD, DARLING! O'WON! DONALD! I'VE GOT MY BODY BACK! JANE'S GIVEN IT BACK!



WE'VE GOT TO GET TO THE HOUSE!

DONALD AND JUDY SPED BACK ACROSS TOWN! THEY RUSHED INTO THE HOUSE! SOMEONE WAS HAMMERING ON THE CLOSET DOOR! DONALD TOOK HIS GUN FROM THE DOOR...



SHE'S IN THERE, JUDY! LOOKED IN THE CLOSET...

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, DONALD?

I'M GOING TO **KILL** HER, JUDY! SHE'S EVIL! I'VE GOT TO KILL HER OR SHE'LL **DO THIS** HORRIBLE THING **AGAIN**! NO ONE WILL **STOP** HER! WE'LL BURY HER IN THE **CELLAR**!



DONALD THREW HIS GUN INTO THE CLOSET DOOR! THEN, THEY OPENED IT! THE OLD WOMAN WAS DEAD! THEY CARRIED HER BODY TO THE CELLAR AND BURIED HER...



IT... IT'S BETTER THIS WAY, JUDY, DEAR!

YES, DONALD!

HEN, HEN! NO, KIDNAP! MY STORY  
ISN'T OVER! NOT YET! THE END  
CAME ABOUT SIX MONTHS LATER!  
ONE NIGHT, AFTER JUDY AND  
DONALD HAD GONE TO BED, JUDY  
HAD A TERRIBLE NIGHTMARE! SHE  
HEARD THE OLD WOMAN'S VOICE,  
UTTERING THOSE STRANGE WORDS!  
WHEN SHE AWOKE...

YES, JUDY FOUND HERSELF BURNED  
IN THE CELLAR! SWEET FILLED HER  
TOOTHLESS MOUTH... PRESSED  
AGAINST HER BEADY EYES! SHE  
PUSHED UP INTO THE COLD FRESH  
AIR...



"WE'VE TAKEN MY BODY  
AGAIN! SHE'S DONE IT AGAIN!"

JUDY, NOW IN THE CORPSE OF THE OLD WOMAN, STUM-  
BLED UP THE CELLAR STAIRS! BITS OF ROTTED FLESH  
FELL AWAY AS SHE MOVED THROUGH THE HOLE TO  
DONALD'S BEDROOM...

WHO... WHO'S THERE?  
GOOD LORD!

IT'S ME, DONALD! JUDY!  
WE'VE TAKEN MY BODY  
AGAIN! KILL HER,  
DONALD! KILL HER AND  
SET ME FREE!



DONALD WENT FOR HIS GUN! THE DECAYED, FEAR-  
SMILING CORPSE OF THE OLD WOMAN FOLLOWED HIM  
TO JUDY'S ROOM! DONALD FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR!  
THE BODY OF HIS WIFE, JUDY, WAS DRIPPING FRIG-  
IDLY...

BUT  
TO GET AWAY,  
BEFORE HE!

KILL HER, DONALD!  
SHOOT HER! SHOOT!



THE SUN SHOT BODIED THROUGH  
THE DARK HOUSE! JUDY'S BODY  
SLUMBED TO THE FLOOR! THEN  
THE CORPSE OF THE OLD WOMAN  
TOTTERED... AND COLLAPSED...



JUDY! JUDY!  
WHERE ARE YOU?

SUDDENLY, JUDY... NOW REPOSSESSING  
OF HER OWN BODY... GASPED, AS  
SHE PASSED AWAY...



I... I'M HERE...  
DONALD! I'M  
GASP... WHERE  
I... BELONG!

JUDY!  
JUDY...  
SOR...  
SOR...

HEN, HEN! WELL! THERE'S A BEING  
LITTLE TALENTED BUT, THERE'S A  
LESSON TO BE LEARNED! ACHOO!  
DON'T MAKE FUN OF THAT STRANGE  
OLD WOMAN WHO COMES BEARING!  
YOU MIGHT FIND YOURSELF IN HER  
SHOES! OH, BY THE WAY! YOU CAN  
WAVE BACK ISSUES STARRING  
ME, THE OLD WITCH AND  
MY HOST... THE CRYPT-KEEPER.



IF YOU WANT  
THE CRYPT-  
KEEPER'S CORNER  
IN THIS ISSUE!  
THIS IS THE  
CRYPT-KEEPER  
SAYING... 'BYE NOW!



# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I like you the most out of The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch. Your comics are great. I watch your show on HBO wherever I can and I watch your Saturday morning cartoons. I have the first book in the series of Crypt books, and I also have a book called "Tales from the Crypt." I also have some of your cards. After I read one of your comic books my sister and my mom read them. My whole family likes scary things.

One of your best stories was "Strangled" in HAUNT #5. Another of my favorites is "Reflection of Death" in CRYPT #7.

Stephen Langlois

Rutland, VT

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I love your comic books. They are great! I'm 11 years old. My brother Mike likes your comics. Too, and he is 13. I love HAUNT #7, it's very good. I was wondering how to get "Tales from the Crypt" Trading Cards? I look everywhere and I can't find them. They look cool. I would love to have a pencil, so please print my address.

Josh Elder

RT 2, BOX 37  
Carter, SD 57528

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

It's me again. You know, David Rodriguez. I still want to know who was thrown off the sled in your story "Wol' Best" (available in GLAD HAUNT #4 as a back issue), and I won't stop writing until you answer it! Heh! I can wait forever; the real question is, can you? Eternally yours,

David Rodriguez

Huntington Park, CA

All of the comics mentioned above are available as back issues! See the back cover of this comic for info on "Crypt" Cards! Spend money!

The perfect puns to throw off the back of a sled when pursued by wolves is... Larry Tubb! Heh, heh! But that only works once a month! And, there's a sleigh, not a sled. Rhymes with "sleigh," if that helps!

—CK

Your comic books are the best! I never thought before that I'd enjoy comic books but as soon as I read one of yours, I loved it. One thing I would like to know is who were your parents, and what year were you born in?

John Gilo

Engle, MA

To Russ,

Hi, how's it swinging? Oh, here I just recently began collecting EC comics. My first was CRYPT #7. My favorite was "Descent." It was cool. Could you tell me the Crypt-Keeper's origin? I've always wondered how he came to be. Tales from the Crypt Rules! Cryptically yours,

William D. Wachle

Pr Wayne, IN

We can tell you my origin, in GLAD CRYPT #5; or you can wait for CRYPT #5. CRYPT Rules! What's new? (imagine considerable answering here.) —CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I think The Old Witch is a greaser. I like your comic books a lot. This is the first time ever I read your comics. I am very impressed with the stories. The Vault-Keeper is worse than The Old Witch. The Vault-Keeper stinks at telling stories.

I also write my own comics. Have you ever spotted someone? My favorite story is "Reflection of Death" in issue #7. Keep up the good work.

Robert Rafols, 3rd Grade

Schenectady, NY

The Vault-Keeper stinks WHILE telling stories! —CK

## 77 YEARS OF EXPERIENCE

Dear Russ,

I am 8 years old. Sometimes I feel sad. I put out some TALES FROM THE CRYPT. I read stories and I feel great. I just started [recently]. Your friend

Sherry Bookman

New York, NY

Dear CK,

I am a big fan and a very old fan of you. I started getting interested in you when I was three; now I am nine almost ten. I got CRYPT 7 (and seven others). I read them all.

Joseph Hestrich

New York, NY

To Russ,

I watch the "Tales from the Crypt" TV show, and I just have to say: What's with the Crypt-Keeper? If you ask me I think it needs more BLOOD 'rounds. Truly,

Donna Ross, age 10

Plainfield, NJ

Dear Russ,

I love your comic books on Tales from the Crypt. When I grow up, I want to become a doctor. I also want to become a comic book collector. John Wingley is the only comic book collector I know. He collected 180 books [by] 1968, [and by] 1968 had a total of 208 comic books.

I watch "Tales from the Crypt" on FOX. I like the one with David Warner about that [Fetichy] girl. That's one of my favorites.

Jonathan Carter, 11 years old

Delmar, IL

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I am 11 years old. I watch your [HBO] TV show a lot, but I don't think I'd like the cartoons.

I collect your comics, but unfortunately I can't find them right now. You The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch's comics are the scariest I've ever read. Are the stories in your comics the ones in the TV show?

Paul O'Leary

Needham, MA

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Hi. All I can say is, great comic! Keep it coming! I'm 12.

going on 13, and a great fan. I don't have HBO, but your show comes on Saturday now on regular TV. Your comics are only at one place, Chesterfield Mass. (Print my address. I love pen-pals. I also love Stephen King movies and books. Great comic! Your #1 Fan,

Gareth Llewellyn

888 Sunbridge Dr  
Chesterfield, MO 63017

Hey CK,

I've been an old horror fan since I was 11. Up until now, at 15, nothing grosses me out like CRYPT. It has the best storyline and art. My favorite frame is from "Reflection of Death", when the character sees his mangled reflection in the mirror. I was wondering if you sold any CRYPT posters my parents won't let me hang real decomposed bodies on my wall, so...

Another thing I've been wondering is if you had any tips on how to draw corpses and other gruesome pictures. I've tried, but they look too well alive. If there is anyone out there who looks much of a horror fanatic, as the, write to the

Mike Torrey

30 Solvia St  
Williamsville, CT 06098

What, no 14-year-olds? Ya' know, the thing that bugs me the most about the HBO and Midvid "Crypt-keeper" is the squeaky voice. Not at all like my real, squeaky-toned!

They do adapt authentic EC comics stories, and retain the original titles. You've perhaps noticed that all of them are presented as news, even when they were actually told by WK or GW.

We have no EC posters, but it would take only 2000 trading cards to cover an 8x10 wall! —CK

Dear Crypt Reader,

Hi. I just moved to Indiana. What I want to know is, do you have a fan club? If you do I'll be willing to join. I think that your comics, shows, and cards are the greatest. I never miss any of your shows because they're so cool.

Cameron Lee

Carmel, IN

Check last month's HAUNT # and INC SF # for the latest RAM CLUB NEWS news, and watch for that feature in WALT, as well. —CK

Dear CK,

There is TALES FROM THE CRYPT comic, CRYPT video, CRYPT television series, CRYPT cartoons, CRYPT pin ball and CRYPT trading cards. What next? Are there going to be TALES FROM THE CRYPT jackets, t-shirts, baseball caps and figures? Or, even a computer game, I hope so! Is there a video I can buy of the HBO television series?

Oliver Wingrave

Farnham Surrey, GB

Write & Cite tell me the videos are the only way to consume the HBO shows there, I don't know details, then, sorry. —CK

Dear Crazy Bag of Bones

I read CRYPT 7 and I think [redacted] is a stuck up Ghoulstuck! I think you should decide who the No. 1 fan is! And I think "Last Respectful" was real Ghoulstuck! "Squealer" are very thrilling, and as are "Voodoo Death!". I would give you two thumbs up but I got my hand chopped off (Never make your sister mad)

[redacted] who wrote a letter to CRYPT 7, I think stuck up because he doesn't claim to be the best! I think [redacted] is real cool! I think the witch and you make a ghoulstuck couple! And I think you have your way of getting your tale in the news! You have a comic, card set, show on FOX and HBO, and a cartoon on Saturday morning!

I hope you publish this letter because someone has to tell [redacted] he's stuck up! Well, I have some things to settle with my sister! Please print my address because me and Lloyd have something to settle! I think [redacted] rules!

Jason Parker

500 Teachers Ct  
Bayton, GA 31502

Now, now—mustn't fight! I deleted the names, positive and negative, to save you some heartache, some hatred! You all know by now that anyone can be #1. Where you're all #1 with me—as long as you buy the comics! It's like Joey says, next letter... —CK

I just finished CRYPT #7 and I was disgusted! Not at your pulp-pounding tales of horror, but at the letters page! These #1 fans—humpf! Yet, I have the solution to their conundrum of just who deserves to be EC's #1 fan. Without further ado, here it is: WHO CARES? What's really important, and you, is who deserves to be #0 last! After all, with #0 comic books at the ripe, what about that worthy fan who is #0? And the newest trend! Christian Fan #1! Now let's get serious, CK, is being the plain, old, non-enhanced #1 fan important at all? I don't think so. On to the stories

"Reflection of Death", despite some wonderful art by Al Feldstein, was an all-too-typical story of the time. EC turned out masterpieces which everybody remembers. Yet, I'll admit that Bill Gaines and his merry Ghoulstuckies told their share of clichéd stories, such as this one. Yet, with the good came the bad, and the EC output of brilliant short stories could not be matched.

The Old Witch's tale for the issue "Last Respectful" was better than the initial tale and was a real spine-tingler. Without any supernatural overtones, the story showed just how far a typical red-blooded 1950s boy would go for his girl. Graham Ingels did a great job on the visuals, and this story presented one of the few times that I've enjoyed Graham's unique work; usually I prefer the cleaner and more stylized styles of Craig and Feldstein. Overall, "Last Respectful" was an enjoyable, if slightly horrible, piece. And most fascinating of all, the subject matter is not something which is totally unbelievable (get ya' over call "Alive," CK)? Or even those wacky headliners always trying to outdo Gilligan? Ah, the classics of film and television.

"Squealer" was definitely the best story in the issue. It was great to see Jack Davis' art in this story, especially to note the evolution of his art, from yesterday's comics to today's commercial art, caricature and postage art. The exaggerated faces that have become a Davis trademark were present in this story, which gave "Squealer" an almost-humorous visual impact. The story itself was suspenseful and quite a testament to the power of fortune tellers, gypsies, mediums and psychics. And a note to you, CK: "a happy medium"? Ha, ha.

Finally, we have "Voodoo Death" in Hell. This was quite an interesting piece about one which went by all too quickly. Maybe all of EC's voodoo stories could be presented, at least the best of them, in a miniseries format. I'd love to see such theme miniseries show up, such as a "vampires" compilation or a book of "lovers' tales."

Joey Marchese

Union, NJ

I wouldn't be caught undead watching "Alive." —CK

Dear CK, WK, GW,

I really like your comic books and that new cartoon on television. Both are very interesting and enjoyable to read and watch. On Saturday mornings I get up and watch "Tales from the Crypt." Most of the time I read the comic books. To me, nothing is more exciting than reading horror stories.

Trevin Moritz

Alpena, MI

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

My name is Jason Jarmoville and I am 11 years old. I love EC comics and all the fabulous stories. I would like to start out by saying I watch your TV show and that's how I found out about the comics. I went to my local comic book store. All they had was the original comics from the 50s! One comic was \$50 dollars! I was quite upset about this since I did not have \$50 dollars with me. I did find issues of VAULT and HAUNT, so I got some.

On the third visit, I got some CRYPT comics. I have just subscribed to CRYPT and have just gotten my first issue in the mail. I liked the story "Bats in My Bathtub" in issue #1. I would like to say I am your #1 fan, but that's what everyone says. I also saw the "Tales From The Crypt" movie. I loved it!

Jason Jarmoville

Santa Rosa, CA

I'm EXTREMELY upset, I've NEVER had \$150 with me!

—CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I have your comic book and TV show. I'd like to know what is your favorite food and movie. In your comic book, is there a story with a magician in it? I'd also like to know what year you were born and where your Crypt is located. Sincerely yours,

Michael Heary

Lindwood, PA

I like nothing better than to curl up with a box of chicken teriyaki takeout and a tape of "Sound of Music." —CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I am a fan of EC comics and you are my favorite. Here's something I would like to be a part of EC comics. I watch "Tales from the Crypt" every Saturday morning and night. I wish it would come on more often and I just wanted to say thank you for making comics and TV shows! Please print my address. Truly yours

Marie Cotton

POB 142  
Chandler, OK 74834

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

You are the coolest guy. Your comics are great. Please give me your phone number. We could make scores together. I really want to do business with you. Your shiny friend,

Michael Palma

Irwin, TX

Sorry to disappoint you, but you can't see films. —CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I just read one of your comics and it was outstanding. I loved both your tales, the Witch's tale was okay and The Vault-Keeper's tale was peaky. What is scary about a wooden doll that kills a couple of guys?

John Duffley

Paradise Valley, AZ

Really,

—CK

Dear Russ

Congratulations on being on your eighth round of EC comics, which is more than what was published under either of the two sixty-four page runs. CRYPT has its usual good run of stories, but these stories get even better in later issues: "The Living Death" (CRYPT #7) looks like it was taken from an Edgar Allan Poe story. I think that it was called "The Strange Case of J. Madams." But then the Crypt-Keeper already knows that.

The two stories "Bats in My Bathtub" and "Midnight Shocks" (CRYPT #8) look a little too similar in theme. Except

in one story the character turns out to be a vampire and in the other story the character turns out to be a ghoul. There is one thing that I never quite understood though. What is the difference between a ghoul and a cannibal? This issue of CRYPT has a great Feldstein cover and the story that it illustrates is not bad either.

Warren Sandford

Burnsville, CA

The difference between a cannibal and a ghoul is nothing that 5 minutes in a microwave won't erase.

—CK

Dear Russ Cochran,

I really like Crypt-Keeper. In fact, he's the man of my dreams (Ha! Ha). I'm trying to save my money so I can subscribe to CRYPT. If it's no trouble could you please send me a picture of the Crypt-Keeper?

Ashley Caswell

Greenwood, IN

Save time, break into that college fund!

—CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

My name is Julio Martinez and I am 15 years old. I am your biggest fan, and also your friend.

The [episode] I read in your cartoon show is "While the Cat's Away." I've seen it 13 times.

Can I be in your show "Tales from the Crypt"? Could I be in your comic books?

Julio Martinez

National City, CA

Maybe. Have you been Cheated, betrayed, strangled, fried, hanged, strangled, strangled, strangled, strangled, strangled or had an intimate experience with a blessed household gadget? If so, you, too, could be the centerpiece of an EC story!

—CK

Dear CK,

You're the most stupid storyteller I ever heard of. Your story's don't even score my 5 year old sister Becky! When I read her "And All Through the House" she told me it was a very boring bed time story and left. And—oh, well—I'm sorry. That was my letter to CK. Sorry Sorry

I just had a few questions for you. Could you please give me a list of all the stories EC adapted from Ray Bradbury and what issue they were in? And did Graham Ingels do any weird stuff around?

Sean Cline

St. Monte, CA

Yes to both. But space is running out. Check each bi-monthly letter column in future for this info!

—CK

Now available this month are WEIRD SCIENCE and SHOCK. Watch for HAUNT, WEIRD SCIENCE and TWO-PICTED next month. Don't forget HAUNT, WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY and CREEP. See them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see back of this issue for details).

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, \$2 each (subject to availability). All others up thru issue #5, \$1.25 each. Issues #6 and up, \$2 each. Add \$2 per order (\$15 outside US) for S&H.

Write to: CRYPT  
RUSS COCHRAN  
POB 449  
WEST PLAIN, MO 65755

#### THIS COMBO REPRINTS

TALES FROM THE CRYPT #225 (JULY, AUG/SEP 81)

COVER by Al Feldstein

"The Trophy"

"Judy, You're Not Yourself Today!"

"I Loved It Death!"

"The Works in Wood"

Jack Davis

Wally Wood

Jack Kaman

Graham Ingels

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EVER LOVE SOMEONE WHO DIDN'T LOVE YOU? PRETTY PAINFUL, ISN'T IT? WELL, IT'S NOT HALF AS PAINFUL AS BEING...



FOR THE FIRST SCENE OF THIS TOUCHING TALE, LET'S LOOK INTO THE APARTMENT OF MARGARET BINKER, WHERE A DELICIOUS LITTLE EPISODE IS REACHING A CLIMAX...



I'M - I'M ~~JERRY~~ EDWARD! I HAD TO DO IT! NOW WILL YOU PLEASE GO? AND DON'T EVER ANNOY ME AGAIN!

BUT MARGIE! I'M ~~BLAD~~ ABOUT YOU! WON'T YOU LET ME TAKE YOU OUT - JUST ONCE? TOMORROW - NOW! RIGHT?





NOT I'M BUSY! I'M BUSY! ALL  
EVERY NIGHT AS FAR AS  
YOU'RE CONCERNED  
HOW WILL YOU LEAVE?  
I HAVE TO DRESS FOR  
A NIGHT DATE!

WOMAN:  
MARGARET!  
I'LL GO!  
BUT I  
WON'T  
GIVE UP!

MARGARET SNIDER BLAMES THE  
DOOR ON POOL EDWARD WALLACE

POOL BAR! WON'T HE  
EVER GADON ON THAT  
HE DOESN'T RATE WITH  
MET HOW MANY TIMES  
DO I WANT TO SLAP  
HIS FACE?

WHILE OUTSIDE, EDDIE DEJECTED  
MOVES SLOWLY DOWN THE DASHEN  
AND STREETS

WHY? WHY WON'T SHE GIVE ME A  
BREAK? SHE KNOWS I'M CRAZY  
ABOUT HER! BUT SHE TREATS ME  
LIKE SHIT! SHE ACTS LIKE SHE  
CAN'T STAND ME!

EDDIE CROSSER THE STREET AND ENTERS THE  
DESERTED PARK! HE SLUMPS DOWN ON A BENCH!  
SOON A STRANGER COMES ALONG! HE STOPS... EYES  
EDDIE... THEN SITS DOWN BESIDE HIM

SHATTEN, YOUNG FELLOW!  
YOU LOOK PRETTY SLIM!

I AM! I'M NUTS ABOUT  
A GIRL, BUT SHE WON'T  
GIVE ME A FINGER!

THE STRANGER SMILES, REACHES INTO HIS POCKET...  
AND PULLS OUT A CARD...

OH... IS JIMMY WELL, SO  
SEE THIS GUY? HE'LL FIX  
YOU UP! GUARANTEED!

WON'T THAT CAR  
HE DO?

THE STRANGER RISES AND DISAPPEARS INTO  
THE NIGHT! EDDIE STUDIES THE SMALL  
WHITE CARD! IT READS: "MUNG STROMMAN,  
ALCHEMIST!" AN ADORABLE FOLLOWS...

AN ALCHEMIST? SAYS I  
THOUGHT THOSE GUYS WENT  
OUT WITH THE MIDDLE AGES?  
OH, WELL, I CAN'T LOSE  
ANYTHING! I'LL GO SEE HIM!

THE ADDRESS ON THE CARD LEADS EDWARD WALLACE TO A DARK  
WINDING STREET IN THE OLDEST PART OF TOWN! THE BUILDING  
HE IS LOOKING FOR IS A RUN-DOWN, DIRTY TENEMENT! HE CLIMBS  
RAT-INFESTED STEPS TO MUNG STROMMAN'S DOOR...

YES?  
WHAT CAN  
I DO FOR YOU?

I... I WAS GIVEN YOUR  
CARD! THE MAN SAID YOU  
COULD HELP ME!

THE WRINKLED, WIGGED OLD MAN STEPS ASIDE AND EDWARD ENTERS A WEIRD ROOM. BOTTLES AND JARS LINE THE WALLS, EACH FILLED WITH BRILLIANTLY COLORED LIQUIDS AND POWDERS.

WHAT SEEMS TO BE THE TROUBLE, YOUNG MAN?

I... I'M IN LOVE WITH A GIRL! BUT SHE... SHE DOESN'T LOVE ME!

OH! 'I SEE' AND YOU WOULD LIKE HER TO **ADD** YOU... TO **POP-SUPP** YOU... TO **LOVE YOU** AND **ONLY YOU**!

YEAH! **THAT'S** WHAT I'D LIKE!

VERY SIMPLE! HERE! TAKE THIS! IT'S A **LOVE POTION**! MY SECRET FORMULA! JUST A **FEW DROPS** AND SHE'S **YOURS**... **ALL YOURS**!

IT... IT MUST BE VERY **EXPENSIVE**... IF IT **REALLY** **WORKS**!

OH, IT **WORKS**! I GUARANTEE THAT! AND IT'S VERY **CHEAP**... **ONLY ONE DOLLAR!**

**ONE DOLLAR?** IS THAT ALL? I'LL TAKE IT!

GOOD-BYE! **NOY** GOOD-BYE, YOUNG MAN! **REMEMBER**, FOR **NOW**! YOU'LL BE **BACK**! THEY **ALL** **COME BACK**!

COME BACK FOR WHAT?

FOR THE **ANTIDOTE**!

OH! NO! **NOT ME**! IF THIS **REALLY** **WORKS**, **MARGARET** I'LL **MADLY** **IN LOVE** WITH **ME**, YOU **WON'T** **SEE ME** **AGAIN**!

WE'LL SEE! WE'LL SEE!

EDWARD RUSHES FROM THE WEIRD ROOM DOWN THE BARBARA-JASON STAIRS, AND RACES ACROSS TOWN TO MARGARET'S APARTMENT...

OH, EDWARD! ARE YOU BACK AGAIN? I TOLD YOU

I. I CAME TO SAY GOOD-BYE, MARGARET! I'M GOING AWAY!

GOOD! THANK HEAVENS! NOW YOU'LL STOP BOTHERING ME!

I BROUGHT THIS WINE, MARGARET! WILL YOU HAVE JUST ONE DRINK WITH ME... TO WISH ME FAREWELL?

ANYTHING? ANYTHING TO GET RID OF YOU?

GOOD! I'LL POUR IT OUT!

EDDIE POURS THE WINE, AND SECRETLY EMPTIES THE CONTENTS OF THE LOVE POTION INTO MARGIE'S GLASS.

WELL! HERE'S TO YOU, MARGIE! I'LL ALWAYS LOVE YOU!

AND HERE'S TO YOU! YIP YIP! GOOD GOODBYES!

MARGIE DRAWS HER GLASS! EDWARD STUNNED AT HER EXPECTANTLY...  
WELL! YOU CAN BE, WON'T YOU? JUST STAND THERE LIKE A DUMMY! WE'VE SAID GOODBYES!

Y-Y-YES! SURE! I WILL! SO! I...  
GOLLY! IT DIDN'T WORK!

EDDIE RELUCTANTLY OPENS THE DOOR! MARGIE WATCHES HIM FRISKY! THEN THE COLD LOOK IN HER EYES SOFTENS... SHE SMILES.

OH, YOU BIG OVERGROWN KID! COME HERE! I'LL KISS YOU GOOD-NITE!

WELL?

MARGIE REEDS AT EDDIE'S PUCKERED LIPS! SUDDENLY SHE BARFS! SHE THROWS HER ARMS AROUND HIS NECK AND KISSES HIM... A LONG HARTUNGHER KISS! A KISS OF LOVE.

EDDIE! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME?

OH, MARGIE! MARGIE!

HOWEVER? YEP! IT WAS JUST LIKE OLD ULRIK, THE ALCHEMIST! MARRIE FELL... HEAD OVER HEELS! EDDIE AND SHE WERE BEAMING! SHE ADORED HIM... PUNCHED HIM... LOVED HIM... LOVED HIM... LOVED HIM TILL EDDIE THOUGHT HE WOULD GO AWAY!



DARLING... DARLING... EDDIE! SWEET... HANDSOME... DYEING EDDIE! OH, HOW I LOVE YOU EDDIE! OH, NOW...



MARRIE, TOUT IT OUT! I'M TRYING TO READ! GO SIT OVER THERE!

MARRIE, SPUNNED BY EDDIE, MOVED TO THE CHAIR ACROSS THE ROOM! THERE SHE SAT, SMILING, SMILING AND STARRING AT EDDIE...

DON'T YOU HAVE ANYTHING TO DO, MARRIE? MUST YOU SIT AND STARE AT ME?

I LOVE YOU! I HAVE NOTHING IN LIFE TO DO EXCEPT LOVE YOU! YOU'RE MY EVERYTHING... MY



IT IS LATE THAT SAME NIGHT THAT EDDIE KNOCKS ON MARRIE'S DOOR...

AM! YOU'VE FINALLY COME BACK! I WENT SAY IT TOOK YOU LONGER THAN USUAL! YOU MUST BE A VERY PATIENT MAN! YOU WANT THE ANTIDOTE, NO DOUBT?

YES! I CAN'T STAND HER ANymore! SHE CRAWLS ALL OVER ME! SHE'S DRIVING ME CRAZY!



HERE! HERE YOU ARE! A FEW DROPS OF THIS AND IT WILL BE ALL OVER! IT'S SWEET AND SURE! DOESN'T LEAVE ANY TRACE!

IT... IT KILLS HER!



YOU HAVE A BETTER METHOD?

NO! NO! ONLY... WELL... I MIGHT INTEND TO KILL HER! YOU SAY IT LEAVES NO TRACE? NOW AGENT?

ONE THOUSAND DOLLARS!

WHAT? BUT THE POTION...

YES! THE POTION IS CHEAP! THE ANTIDOTE IS EXPENSIVE! I LOVE MONEY ON THE POTION! BUT I WORE THAN MAKE IT UP ON THE ANTIDOTE! AND ANYONE WHO BUYS THE POTION ALWAYS BUYS THE ANTIDOTE... SOONER OR LATER! WELL, YES OR NO?

YES, I SURE!



AT BREAKFAST THE NEXT MORNING, EDWARD SPILLS THE 'ANTIDOTE' INTO MARGE'S COFFEE WHILE HER BACK IS TURNED...

OH, DEAR! YOUR TASTY ISN'T READY YET! I'M SORRY, DEARTEST!

THAT'S ALL RIGHT, MARGARET! I LEFT MY WATCH IN THE BATHROOM, ANYWAY!



BUT THOUGHTFUL, EVER-LOVING MARGE, KNOWING THAT HER DARLING HUSBAND LIKES HIS COFFEE HOT, SWITCHES CUPS... BECAUSE HERE STEAMS MORE...

COME, DARLING! YOUR COFFEE IS GETTING COLD!

YOU CAN START! I'LL BE RIGHT THERE!



BUT MARGE, THE DEVOTED WIFE, WAITS PATIENTLY FOR EDWARD TO RETURN TO THE TABLE! AND EDWARD DID SO! WANT TO AVOID WITNESSING HER... SHALL WE SAY, FORDN...

MARGE! COFFEE'S... IS IT, DEAR? OH, GOOD! THIS MORNING I'VE SO HAPPY...



EDWARD SLUMPS TO THE FLOOR AND IS VERY STILL! HE IS GONE! DEAD! DRIFT AND DUNE... JUST LIKE ALICE SAID! THERE IS A SLIGHT SMILE ON HIS FACE...

EDWARD... DARLING! SPEAK TO ME! SPEAK TO ME!



THERE IS A SMILE ON HIS FACE BECAUSE... SOMEWHERE IN THAT UNKNOWN WORLD THAT IS THE NEXT-AFTER... AS EDWARD TRAVELS THROUGH THE MIST...

OH, WELL! SO I DRANK THE ANTIDOTE INSTEAD! SO I'M DEAD! AT LEAST, I'M *NOT* OF HER!



YES, EDWARD SMILES AS HE MOVES THROUGH THE MIST! BUT THE SMILE IS SHORT-LIVED, FOR...

EDWARD! DARLING! WAIT FOR ME!



YES! IT IS MARGE'S VOICE! SHE BUSETS THROUGH THE MIST, RUSHES UP TO EDWARD, AND SMOTHERS HIM WITH KISSES...

OH, DARLING! WHEN YOU DIED, I KNEW I WOULDN'T BE ABLE TO GO ON WITHOUT YOU, SO I COMMITTED SUICIDE! NOW, WE'LL BE TOGETHER FOR ETERNITY!



YES! YES! SHE'S RIGHT, EDWARD! BUT DON'T WORRY! MAYBE SOMEDAY YOU MIGHT BUMP INTO LEONARD STORNGAN AGAIN! PERSONALLY, I WOULDN'T SET ON IT! I DON'T THINK HE AND YOU ARE HEADED FOR THE SAME PLACE!

OH, BY THE WAY! WANT OF YOU HAVE ASKED ABOUT SUBSCRIBING TO TALKS FROM THE CRYPT? FOR THIS INFORMATION, READ MY COLUMN, THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

ARE YOU'RE BACK? DO YOU LIKE THE LITTLE TID-BITS OF TERROR I DROD OUT OF MY CAULDRON, ERY WELL, COME IN! SOME IN! DON'T JUST STAND THERE SAYING! IT'S ME, THE OLD WITCH... MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! COME CLOSER TO THE FIRE, WHERE IT'S WARM! THEN WHEN YOU SHIVER FROM THE STORY I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU, I'LL KNOW IT ISN'T FROM THE COLD! COMFY! GOOD! THEN I'LL BEGIN! THIS IS A TALE, DRIPPING WITH DREAD! I CALL IT....

## THE WORKS...IN WAX!



MY STORY BEGINS IN THE NINETEENTH CENTURY, IN ENGLAND? ON A DARK AND WINDING STREET HOLO LONDON STANDS A FAMOUS STRUCTURE. THE HOUSE LANE WAS HISTORY! INSIDE, THE OWNER HADG CROWNED AS HIS BEAUTIFUL, BOUNCING WIFE

WIFE MARKET IT IS TIME TO OPEN UP! ARE ALL THE TABLES DUSTED?

YES, HENRY I AM PENDING! YOU MAY UNLOCK THE DOORS!



THE FAIR OF THE HOSS LANE WAXWORKS IS WIDE-SPREAD/OUT-  
SIDE THE INFAMED DOOMSLA GROWS HAS ALREADY GATHERED/  
TOURISTS FROM ALL OVER THE WORLD TRAVEL TO SEE THE  
FAMOUS MUSEUM... AND ITS NOTORIOUS *CHAMBER OF HORRORS*!



THE DOORS ARE OPENING! STOP PUSHING! WELCOME, LADIES AND GENTLE-  
MEN! WELCOME TO MARIE AND HENRI MATAUD'S WAXWORKS!

YES! MARIE AND HENRI MATAUD'S  
WAXWORKS IS WORLD RENOWNED!  
I KNOW WHY! BECAUSE THE WAX  
FIGURES LOOK SO REAL! THAT  
THEY LOOK ALMOST ALIVE! AND  
IN THE *CHAMBER OF HORRORS*,  
WELL, YOU CAN IMAGINE.



LOOK AT HER FACE!  
SHE ACTUALLY LOOKS  
LIKE SHE'S BEING  
STRANGLED!

GASP! DIDN'T IT  
TURN MY  
STOMACH!  
IT'S THE FAMED  
MURDERER,  
SYDNEY EVERSAND,  
WITH ONE OF HIS  
VICTIMS!



THAT'S JACK, THE  
RIPPER! I'D  
SWEAR HE  
MOVED!



THAT'S JOHN BARRINGTON!  
HE STRANGLED THIRTY-  
THREE WOMEN BEFORE  
THEY CAUGHT HIM.

THE MUSEUM, HOWEVER, IS WHAT A PLACE, WHAT A PLACE.  
PARDON ME, MAM! CAN YOU TELL  
ME... MAM? I'D LIKE SOME INFOR-  
MATION... GUARD... I SAY, THAT'S  
VERY RUDE! I'LL REPORT...



GAMES! THAT'S A WHAT  
FIGURE? PEOPLE ARE  
LAUGHING AT YOU!

THE ANNOYER THROWN PUSHED ITS WAY INTO  
THE MATAUD ESTABLISHMENT... FILLING  
HENRI'S OVERTSTRETCHED HANDS WITH COINS  
AND PAPER MONEY! INSIDE, WAX FIGURES  
STAND EXPECTANTLY, AWAITING THE PATRONS  
EYES...

PLEASE... LADIES AND  
GENTLEMEN! PLENTY OF ROOM  
INSIDE! HAVE YOUR ADMISSION  
PRICE READY! TAKE YOUR TIME...



SOON, HOWEVER, THE DAY PASSES, AND CLOSING TIME ARRIVES! THE MILLING THRODS IS UNWINDING OUT, AND ONCE MORE THE DOORS ARE CLOSED. HENRI NATAUD BREATHES A SIGH OF RELIEF...

WHEN? WELL, MARIE? ANOTHER DAY, BUT IT IS A RELIEF TO HAVE SILENCE AGAIN, IS IT NOT?

YES, HENRI! I WILL GRAPE THE TABLES WHILE YOU COUNT THE DAY'S RECEIPTS!



HENRI DISAPPEARS INTO THE OFFICE AND MARIE TURNS TO THE MARY HAN FIGURES THAT LINE THE WALLS.

WELL! TODAY WAS NOT SO BAD, WAS IT, MY FRIENDS? AT LEAST THERE WERE NO MISCHIEVOUS CHILDREN, ARE?



AFTER A WHILE, HENRI COMES OUT OF THE OFFICE AND CALLS TO MARIE.

MARY?

MARY?

THE BEST THING I'VE HAD THIS YEAR, MARIE!



HENRI CALLS MARIE'S NAME SEVERAL TIMES BEFORE SHE RUNS UP TO HIM.

MARIE! DIDN'T YOU HEAR ME CALL YOU?

I... I'M SORRY, HENRI! I WAS... BUSY!



HENRI STAMPS DOWN THE LINE OF EXHIBITS.

SORRY! BUSY DOING WHAT? YOU HAVE NOT DRAINED THE FIGURES! YOU...



SUDDENLY HIS EYES FALL UPON THE EXHIBIT OF JOHN BARRETT, THE STRANGLER.

'HOW DID?' WHAT HAVE YOU DONE? HIS HEAD? YOU TURNED HIS HEAD!

YES, HENRI! - I FELT SORRY FOR HIM!



SORRY! SORRY! WHAT ARE YOU SAYING ABOUT?

HE NERSED ME TO DO IT! HE SAID HE COULDN'T STAND LOOKING AT HER EYES...







MARIE! YOU ARE OUT OF YOUR MIND!

NO, HENRI! NO! MONSIEUR EVERARD CANNOT PLEADED WITH ME.



HENRI TWISTS THE WRIST HEAD SO IT CACK MORE STARED DOWN AT THE STRANGLED GIRL.

MARIE! LEAVE THE FIGURES ALONE!

NO, HENRI! DON'T!



THEN HENRI LEADS MARIE AWAY... YOU... HAVE BEEN WORKING TOO HARD, MARIE! YOU NEED A REST!

I'M NOT TIRED, HENRI! I AM ALL RIGHT!

THE NEXT DAY, CROWDS ONCE MORE FLOCK TO THE ROSE LANE WAR MUSEUM.



SEE! THAT'S SYRUS EVERARD, THE HATCHET MURDERER!

HE DOESN'T LOOK SO BAD.

SACRE DIED!



AFTER THE LAST VISITOR LEAVES MARIE! COME HERE!

YES, HENRI!



MARIE! DID YOU LOWER MONSIEUR EVERARD'S ARM TO HIS SIDE?

YES, HENRI! HE WAS SO TIRED! THE HATCHET IS... SO HEAVY! I FELT SORRY FOR HIM!

MARIE! WHAT IS HAPPENING TO YOU? YOU ARE GOING MAD!

NO, HENRI! IT IS TRUE! MONSIEUR EVERARD ASKED ME... NO, BESSER ME... TO LOWER HIS ARM! I COULD NOT REFUSE! HE...



AND AS HENRI STORMS FROM THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS...



MARIE SITS SIDE-BY-SIDE IN THE CENTER OF THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS.

NOW, MY FRIENDS ARE ALL HAPPY, HENRI. ALL HAPPY...



HENRI'S EARS BOWED FROM TABLET TO TABLET.

"RUINED! YOU'VE RUINED THE EXHIBITS!"



INDEED, MARIE HAD ALTERED THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS... IT IS, IN FACT, NO LONGER HORRIBLE.

THEY WERE SO ~~SCARED~~ ~~AFRAID~~! WE WERE ~~PERFORMING~~ THEM! THEY COULDN'T ~~STAND~~ IT ANY LONGER! I HAD TO DO IT!

YOU TURNED M'BIEN BARROTE'S HEAD AROUND...



LOWERED M'BIEN EYEBARD'S EYEBROWS.



HENRI'S FACE IS FLUSHED! HE CLENCHES HIS FISTS, MOVING TOWARD MARIE.

I TOLD YOU WHAT I'D DO, MARIE! I TOLD YOU WHAT I'D DO IF YOU FOUNDED THEM AGAIN...



HENRI'S HANDS CLOSE AROUND MARIE'S WHITE THROAT TIGHTER, TIGHTER...

NO, HENRI! PLEASE! I... I... I... I... I... I...



MARIE'S BODY GROWS LIMP AND SHE SLIPS FROM HENRI'S GRASP DEAD! HENRI TURNS AT A SOUND BEHIND HIM...

I... I... NO! NO!



THE BLOOD FLOODED OF DYING EVERARD. THE HATCHET  
HUNDRED STEPS... THEN TURNED TOWARD HENRI... ITS  
EYES BLAZING...

"NOT I'M  
DREAMING? YOU'RE DEAD!  
YOU CAN'T BE... ALIVE!"



JACK THE RIPPER STEPS FROM HIS TABLEAU. HIS WHISTLE  
BLEATING IN THE DARK LIGHT...

"KEEP AWAY! KEEP  
AWAY!"



THE OTHERS... JOHN BARROTT, THE STRANGLER, LUCY  
BROOMAN, WITH HER AX... GEORGE CRABTREE, THE  
NOTORIOUS POISONER... FREDERICK VON MEINER, THE  
BLOODHOUND, WITH HIS CLUB... ALL OF THEM MOVE  
TOWARD THE MONUMENTAL, GOWERING HENRI NATAUD...

OUTSIDE, IN THE DARK DESERTED LONDON STREET, A  
BLOOD-CURLING SCREAM FILLS THE AIR, ECHOING  
OVER THE ORNAMENT-POLE...

NO. NO. NO.



YAAAAAHHHHHH!



THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN THE HOSE LANE WAYWORKS DOES NOT OPEN  
ITS DOORS, THE POLICE INVESTIGATE? THE DOORS ARE FORCED? INSIDE,  
THEY FIND A STRANGE, SHIRT A NAME TABLEAU OF WAX FIGURES STANDS  
REVERENTLY ABOUT THE BODY OF NAME NATAUD AS SHE LIES ON A WAX-  
FLOWER IMBEDDED ALTAR? AT THE FOOT OF THE ALTAR, A HUGE CANDLE  
BURNS? AND IF YOU LOOK REAL HARD, YOU CAN SEE... BENEATH THE TRAN-  
SLUCENT WAX OF THE TREMENDOUS CANDLE... THE REMAINS OF HENRI  
NATAUD...

HEE-HEE? AND THAT'S MY STORY.  
KIDNED? DIDN'T IT JUST MELT  
YOUR COLD HEARTS? YES, HENRI WAS  
ALL BURNED UP OVER WHAT NAME  
DID TO THE CHAMBER OF HORRORS!  
BUT HE SOON BOILED OFF... WHAT  
WAS LEFT OF HIM, THAT IS! THE  
FIGURES THAT HE AND NAME  
CREATED, CERTAINLY WERE LIFE-  
LIFE! WEREN'T  
THEY? FOR LIFE!  
LIKE IF YOU ARE  
MY NAME! DON'T  
CRAZY AFTER ALL,  
DID IT WAS HENRI  
WHO WAS THE  
DRIVE? SEE YOU  
NEXT IN  
THE HALL OF  
HORROR!

GOOD  
LORD!  
LOOK!

HENRI NATAUD!  
HE... HE'S THE  
WICK... OF THE  
CANDLE!



THE  
END

YOU SAY YOU  
DON'T GET OUT MUCH?

YOU SAY IT'S A 45-MINUTE BUS TRIP, WITH A TRANSFER, TO THE COMIC BOOK SHOP? YOU SAY IT'S A HARROWING 30-MINUTE DRIVE ON THE EXPRESSWAY TO THE MALL, AND THEN A 30-MINUTE MERRY-GO-ROUND RIDE TO FIND A PARKING PLACE? YOU SAY YOUR TOWN DOESN'T EVEN HAVE A COMIC BOOK SHOP OR BOOKSTORE? IS THAT WHAT'S TROUBLING YOU, BUNKY? WELL, THEN, YOU SHOULD . . .



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GLAD VAULT #6



GLAD WEIRD #1



GLAD WEIRD #2



GLAD WEIRD #3



GLAD WEIRD #4



GLAD HAUNT #1



GLAD HAUNT #2

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELCOME TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR, HORROR FIDELS! YES, IT'S ME AGAIN... THE CRYPT-KEEPER! ONLY MORE I AM YOUR HOST IN MY MAD-HOUSE, KILLED FROM THE CRYPT! FOR MY FIRST OFFERING, I HAVE CHOSEN FROM MY VAST COLLECTION OF TERROR FABLES THAT I KEEP IN MY CRYPT... A FAVORITE OF MINE! IT'S A GRILLING STORY OF VIOLENCE AND REVENGE! I CALL THIS LITTLE EPIC...

## DRAWN AND QUARTERED!



THE YOUNG ARTIST YOU ARE WATCHING IS **MAX MOORE**. HE IS A RECENT ARRIVAL IN HAITI! HE HAS SPENT HIS LAST PENNY TO COME HOME! BACK HOME IN THE STATES, MAX WAS A FAILURE! FENTON BREEDLEY, THE ART CRITIC, SAID HIS WORK WAS POOR! ARTHUR GREEN, THE ART DEALER, COULDN'T SELL A PICTURE! AND SO, LARRY DILFANT, THE FAMOUS ART COLLECTOR, HAD BOUGHT UP EVERY PAINTING THAT MAX HAD DONE.

CHEAP! IT HAD BEEN ENOUGH TO BRING MAX HOME... TO HAITI... THE ISLAND OF HOODOO!



LATER, IN A SMALL, SPEEDY-BUDGET BAR, MAX SITS DEJECTEDLY AT A TABLE...

MAX! MAX MOORE! YOU OLD BEGGAR...

BOB! BOB BICKSON? WHAT A SIGHT FOR SORE EYES!



THE NEWCOMER GREETED MAX WITH A WARM HANDSHAKE AND SITS DOWN.

SAY! WHAT ARE YOU DOING? HOUNSHINE IT? YOU ARTISTS ARE ALL ALREADY SHabby CLOTHES...

IF I COULD AFFORD BETTER I'D BUY IT, BOB!



DON'T GIVE ME THAT, MAX! ANY ARTIST WHO SELLS FIVE BRAND A PICTURE...

WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT? I NEVER SOLD A PICTURE FOR MORE THAN FIFTY DUCKS BACK IN THE STATES!



THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I SAW ONE OF YOUR PAINTINGS GO FOR FIVE BRAND! IT WAS AT THE ARTHUR GREEN GALLERY! LARRY DILFANT BOUGHT IT...

BUT... BREEDLEY? FENTON BREEDLEY, THE CRITIC, SAID MY PAINTINGS WERE BAD... SHOWED NO TALENT!



TEAR! WELL, FENTON BREEDLEY CHANGED HIS MIND! HIS COLUMNS CALL FOR A BEGGAR... A MASTER! SAY... YOU STILL HAVE YOUR WORK, DON'T YOU?

THAT'S JUST IT! I SOLD THEM ALL... EVERY PICTURE... TO LARRY DILFANT...



SOMETHING TELLS ME YOU'VE BEEN TAKEN FOR A RYDE, MAX!

BOB! CAN YOU LET ME HAVE SOME MONEY? I'LL SELL IT... TO BUY MY REVENGE...



AND SO, LATE THAT NIGHT, MAX MOOR LEAVES PORT-AU-PRINCE AND TRAVELS INTO THE JUNGLES OF HAITI... FOLLOWING THE SOUND OF THE VOODOO DRUMS! SOON HE REACHES A CLEARING WHERE SEVERAL NATIVES ARE DANCING AND CHANTING...



GO AWAY! WHITE MAN! THIS NOT FOR YOU! GO AWAY!

I'VE COME TO BUY VOODOO! I HAVE MONEY!

MAX IS LED INTO A THATCHED HUT WHERE A WRINKLED OLD NATIVE HUGGLES OVER A SMALL FIRE...



HE SAY HE COME TO BUY VOODOO?

WHAT DO YOU WANT VOODOO FOR... WHITE MAN?

REVENGE! THREE MEN HAVE STOLEN FROM ME... AND I WANT REVENGE!

AFTER MAX TELLS THE OLD NATIVE HIS STORY...



YOU SAY YOU ARE ARTIST? YOU MAKE GOOD PICTURES?

I THINK SO!

THE WRINKLED OLD MAN PUTS A SMALL POT UPON THE FIRE AND BEGINS A WEIRD CHANT! THEN HE TURNS TO MAX...

PLACE YOUR HAND... HAND YOU PAINT WITH... INTO BOILING CONTENTS OF POT!

BUT I'LL SCALD MYSELF!



YOU WANT VOODOO? YOU MUST DO IT!

DEAR! DEAR! BUT IF THAT STUFF IS AS HOT AS IT LOOKS, I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO PAINT AGAIN...



MAX HESITATES! HE STARES DOWN AT THE FOUL-SMELLING, BUBBLING, STEAMING CONTENTS IN THE POT! SUDDENLY HE PLUNGES HIS RIGHT HAND INTO THE BUBBLING MESS...



WH... WHY IT DON'T BURN?

VOODOO IS FINISHED! VOODOO IS YOURS! GIVE ME MONEY!

WHAT? IS THAT ALL? SAY! WHAT IS THIS? DON'T GET ONE OF THOSE DOLLS TO STICK FIRE INTO!

YOU MR... ARTIST? YOU CAN DRAW! YOU DON'T NEED DOLL! NOW YOU GO...



MAX CURSES THE OLD MAN FOR GLOATING HIM AND STAMPS OUT OF THE HUT. LATER, IN HIS SHABBY STUDIO, MAX PUTS THE FINISHING TOUCHES ON HIS SELF-PORTRAIT...

"BLASTED NATIVE! I MUST HAVE BEEN *CRAZY* TO THINK I COULD GET *REVENGE* WITH *WOODCO*...



THAT NIGHT, MAX CANNOT SLEEP. FINALLY HE GETS OUT OF BED, SITS DOWN AT THE TABLE AND HOLY BEING TO SKETCH THE VASE THERE...

"I'VE GOT TO GET *BACK* TO THE STORES... AND *GET* THOSE *DIRT*Y...



ANDRILLY MAX RIPS THE DRAWING OF THE VASE FROM HIS SKETCH PAD AND TEARS IT INTO TINY PIECES...

"THEY *GIVE* ME *PLENTY* IF THEY DON'T *COME* *ACROSS*. I'LL *FEAR* *EACH* OF THEM *LIKE* FROM *LIKE* THIS...



SUDDENLY THERE IS A CRASH BEHIND MAX! HE SPINS AROUND! THE *PAGE* HE HAD BEEN *DRAWING* IS LYING ON THE FLOOR... *SMASHED TO BITS*...

"IT... IT MUST HAVE FALLEN OFF THE TABLE WHEN I *TORN* UP THE... THE *DRAWING* OF IT!"



MAX STARES IN HORROR AT THE PIECES OF PAPER IN HIS HAND...

"IT... IT'S... *POODOO*!"



SWIFTLY, MAX SKETCHES THE CRUST OF BREAD THAT LIES ON THE FLOOR NEXT TO THE BARRAGE CAN! THEN HE TAKES AN *BRASER* AND BURS OUT HALF OF IT...

"I'VE GOT TO BE... *JOKE*!"



FOR A FULL MINUTE, MAX STARES AT THE CRUST OF BREAD! NOTHING HAPPENS! THEN, SUDDENLY, A *HUGE* RAT DARTS OUT FROM BEHIND THE *BARRAGE* CAN AND BEGINS TO *DEVOUR* THE BREAD...

"IT *DOES* *WORK*! IT *DOES*!"



THE RAT, STARTLED BY MAX'S EXCLAMATION, DARTS AWAY LEAVING HALF OF THE GHOST UNSEEN. THE BARE HALF THAT STILL REMAINS ON THE PAPER OR MAX'S SKETCH PAD? SUDDENLY MAX GASPS! ON THE EASEL... WATCHING HIM... IS...

"GOOD LORD! MY SELF-PORTRAIT! I FINISHED IT TONIGHT?!"  
"WORD?"



MAX TAKES HIS PALETTE KNIFE AND SCRATCHES A SMALL RICK IN THE PORTRAIT'S CHEEK! THEN HE SITS DOWN TO WAIT! NOTHING HAPPENS! SOON MAX'S HEAD BEGINS TO NOD! SLEEP CREEPS UPON HIM! THEN... AS HE DOZES OFF... HE TOPPLES FORWARD!



THE FALL AWAKENS HIM! HE LIES SPRAWLED, FACE DOWNWARD ON THE FLOOR! THERE IS A SURPRISING SENSATION ON HIS CHEEK! MAX PUTS HIS HAND TO HIS FACE AND FEELS SOMETHING WET AND STICKY...

"BLOOD! I... I PUT MY FACE ON THE BROKEN VASE WHEN I FELL..."



MAX STARES WIDE-EYED IN HORROR AT HIS SELF-PORTRAIT! IT SEEMS TO BE SMILING AT HIM...

"OH LORD! MY PORTRAIT IS FRODOO, TOO! I CAN'T DESTROY IT! I'VE GOT TO PROTECT IT FROM HARM!"



THEN MAX BEGINS TO LAUGH...

BUT... WHAT POWER I HOLD, HOW MANY ADVENTURES I CAN HAVE! ANY PICTURE I DRAW IS FRODOO! ANYTHING THAT HAPPENS TO THE PICTURE HAPPENS TO THE ORIGINAL SUBJECT!"



SEVERAL DAYS LATER, WITH A LOAN FROM BOB DICKSON, MAX FLIES TO NEW YORK. HIS PREVIOUS SELF-PORTRAIT UNDER HIS ARM.

FIRST THING I'VE GOT TO DO IS PUT THIS PORTRAIT WHERE IT WILL BE SAFE!"



MAX GOES STRAIGHT TO HIS OLD STUDIO'S SHINY NEW BUILDING! HARRY HALLER, HIS EX-LANDLORD WHO HAD THROWN HIM OUT FOR NON-PAYMENT OF RENT, ANSWERS THE DOOR.

"WELL, MAX BOON! I SUPPOSE YOU WANT YOUR OLD STUDIO BACK, BUT WELL, IF YOU PAY ME THE BACK RENT... YOU CAN HAVE IT!"

"HERE'S YOUR BACK RENT AND A MONTH IN ADVANCE..."



THEN MAX BUYS A SAFE... LARGE ENOUGH TO HOLD HIS SELF-PORTRAIT.



MAX TAKES A SHEET OF DRAWING PAPER AND SKETCHES A PICTURE OF HARRY HALLER, THE LANDLORD.



MAX TAKES AN ERASER AND RUBS OUT ONE OF MR. HALLER'S EYES.



SUDDENLY, OUTSIDE, THERE IS A SHRIEK OF DRAGS AND A SCREAM OF PAIN! MAX RIES TO THE WINDOW! ON THE STREET, A CAR W/0 HAS BATTERED! MR. HALLER, MAX'S LANDLORD, HAS BEEN RUN OVER BY A CAR.



YOU, MAX, TAKES ONLY A SHEET OF PAPER AND DRAWS THE PORTRAIT OF PENTON BREEDLY, THE ART CRITIC.



MAX TAKES AN ERASER AND ERASES THE EYES ON BREEDLY'S PORTRAIT...



FAR ACROSS THE CITY, PENTON BREEDLY SCREAMS IN PAIN! HIS WIFE HAS JUST FLUNG ACID AT HIS FACE...





ON A THIRD SHEET OF PAPER, MAX DRAWS A LIKENESS OF ARTHUR GREEN, ART DEALER.

YOU LIED TO ME, ARTHUR! YOU TOLD ME MY PICTURES WERE *WORTHLESS*... THAT YOU COULDN'T *SELL* THEM! THEN YOU *DID*... WHEN THEY WERE *NO LONGER MINE*!



WITH THE ERASER, MAX OBLITERATES ARTHUR'S HANDS...

THAT WAS AN *UNDERHANDED TRICK*, GREEN! YES! *UNDER-HANDED!* SO... NO HANDS FOR YOU, ANYMORE!



IN THE BACK ROOM OF THE GREEN GALLERIES, ARTHUR SLUMPS TO THE FLOOR... SHRIEKING IN PAIN.

SOMEbody GET AN AMBULANCE! MR GREEN JUST CAUGHT HIS HANDS IN THE *SN MATT-CUTTER*!



IN HIS STUDIO, MAX MOONWITS BEFORE HIS DEATH PAD... GASPING FOR BREATH.

AIR! I NEED AIR! I'M SUFFOCATING! I CAN'T BREATHE!



SUDDENLY MAX REALIZES WHAT IS HAPPENING! HE STUMBLES TO THE SAFE THE ROOM SPENDING BEFORE HEATER...

AIR TIGHT... SAFE? PORTRAIT... SUFFOCATING! GOT TO... GET IT... OUT... INTO THE AIR...



JUST AS EVERYTHING SEEMS BLAM MAX MANAGES TO OPEN THE SAFE! HE LIES BEFORE IT, SUCKING IN THE COOL AIR...

GASP... THE SAFE IS NO GOOD! I'VE GOT TO FIND A *BETTER SPOT!* THE GASP PORTRAIT NEEDS AIR...



MAX GOES TO THE CLOSET! HE PUTS THE PORTRAIT INSIDE! IN THE ROOF OF THE CLOSET IS A KEY-LIGHT...

THIS IS A GOOD SPOT! I CAN OPEN THE KEY-LIGHT SLIGHTLY AND LOCK THE DOOR!



MAX TURNS THE SMALL CRANK! THAT OPENS THE SKY-LIGHT TO ADMIT AIR! THEN HE CLOSSES THE DOOR! INSIDE THE CLOSET, HIS SELF-PORTRAIT SMILES UP AT THE DAYLIGHT...



THE NEXT DAY, THE NEWSPAPERS CARRY THE STORIES OF THE UN-FORTUNATE ACCIDENTS TO HALLEY AND BREEDLY AND GREEN...

NOW IT'S TIME FOR ME TO SEE LAWRENCE DILFANT... THE MAN WHO PROFITED THE MOST... BY BUYING MY PAINTINGS CHEAP AND SELLING THEM AT A HIGH PRICE...



AS MAX MOORE LEAVES HIS STUDIO, UP ON THE ROOF, A SIGN PAINTER REACHES HIS PAINTS ON A SCAFFOLD, RIPPING A BILLBOARD...



MAX MAKES HIS WAY DOWN THE STEPS INTO THE SUBWAY...

IT WON'T TAKE MUCH FOR ME TO CONVINCE DILFANT TO HAND OVER SOME OF THE MONEY THAT'S DUE ME...



UP ON THE SCAFFOLD, THE SIGN-PAINTER ACCIDENTALLY KICKS A LARGE CAN OF TURPENTINE...

GRAT IT! THERE GOES MY TURPES!



THE CAN OF TURPENTINE PLUMMETS DOWNWARD, CRASHING THROUGH THE SKYLIGHT...



IN THE SUBWAY STATION, A HORRIFIED CROWD GATHERS, STANDING DOWN AT THE REMAINS OF MAX MOORE UNDER THE HUGE WHEELS OF THE SECOND CAR OF THE SUBWAY TRAIN...

WE... WE JUST FELL AS THE TRAIN PULLED IN!

GOOD LORD! LOOK ... AT WHAT'S LEFT OF HIM!



BACK IN MAX MOORE'S STUDIO... IN THE CLOSET... THE CAN OF TURPENTINE THAT CRASHED THROUGH THE SKYLIGHT EMPTIED OUT... RUNNING DOWN OVER MAX'S SELF-PORTRAIT... HORRIBLY DISTORTING THE NO LONGER SMILING FACE PAINTED UPON THE CANVAS...



HER, NOW? WELL, KIDNES? THAT'S MY STORY! DO YOU BELIEVE IN VOODOO, NOW? OF COURSE, MAX MOORE'S VOODOO POWERS MIGHT HAVE BEEN A SERIES OF COINCIDENTAL ACCIDENTS! WHO'S TO SAY PENTON BREEDLY IS BLIND? HARRY HALLEY HAS ONE LEG! ARTHUR GREEN NO LONGER HAS HANDS! I DON'T THINK WE CAN ASK THEM! THEY WENT BE PREJUDICED! AND HOW MAY? HE'D BE NO HELP! MAX WAS DOING ALL RIGHT, TOO, UNTIL THAT SIGN PAINTER KICKED THE BUCKET! THAT WAS WHEN MAX DID! WELL, NO ON TO THE RAIL! - KEEPER! HE'S GOT ANOTHER HORROR YARN TO SPIN! AND IF YOU STILL HAVEN'T GOT SACK ISSUES, MY COLUMN, THE GRIP! - KEEPER'S CORNER WILL TELL YOU, NOW!



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEN, HEN! GREETINGS SHOULD I LET ME TELL WHAT HORROR STORY FROM MY PRIVATE COLLECTION OF CHILLERS THAT I KEEP HERE IN MY VAULT CAN I PALPITATE YOUR LITTLE CAGGERS WITH THIS TIME? YES, IT'S ME AGAIN YOUR HOST IN HORROR THE PAUL KEEPER! AN, I KNOW! HERE'S A DELIGHTFUL SPINE-TIMBLER THAT WILL CURDLE THE MARROW IN YOUR BONES! IT'S A FAVORITE OF MINE THAT I AFFECTIONATELY CALL

## THE BORROWED BODY!



HIGH UP OVER SMOKEY PINK SKYLINE, IN AN ELABORATELY FURNISHED PENTHOUSE APARTMENT, AN ATTRACTIVE WOMAN PACED THE PLOSH-CARPETED FLOOR NERVOUSLY SMOKING CIGARETTE AFTER CIGARETTE! FROM TIME TO TIME SHE GLANCES ANNOYED AT THE FRONT DOOR. ESPECIALLY FORMALLY THE CHIMES STARTLE HER AND SHE RUSHES TO THE DOOR AND FLINGS IT OPEN.

YOU'RE LATE, FRED! COME IN!

YOU'RE CRAZY, SANDRA. INVITING ME HERE! IF YOUR HUSBAND FOUND OUT ABOUT US, HE'D DIVORCE YOU IN A MINUTE! THEN WE'D LOSE THE DOUGH!





DON'T WORRY ABOUT ANN, FRED! HERBERT HAS A BOARD MEETING TONIGHT! HE WON'T BE HOME TILL LATE!

THIS MEETING SECRETLY IS DRIVING ME NUTS, SANDRA! WHEN ARE WE GOING TO KNOCK HIM OFF?



FORGOT? I CAN'T STAND IT ANY LONGER, EITHER, FRED! I WANT TO BE RID OF HIM FOR GOOD!

C'MERE, SANDY! YOU LOOK HAVENING, TONIGHT!



NO, FRED! WE'VE GOT A LOT TO TALK ABOUT. PLANS TO MAKE.

OKAY. AFTER JUST ONE LITTLE KISS...



FINALLY FRED RELUCTANTLY RELEASES SANDRA. DORRAT, WIFE OF THE WEALTHY CORPORATION EXECUTIVE, HERBERT DORRAT, FROM HIS EMBRACE OF DOES TO THE BAR AND POURS HIMSELF A DRINK...

OHAY, SANDRA. SHOOT! WHAT'S THE FITCH?

HERBERT ALWAYS WALKS HOME FROM BOARD MEETINGS! YOU'LL WAIT FOR HIM IN A CERTAIN ALLEY.



AND SO WE LEAVE THE PLOTTING LOVERS AND CROSS TOWN TO AN IMPPOSING OFFICE BUILDING! THE BOARD MEETING OF THE DORRAT INVESTMENT COMPANY IS JUST BREAKING UP...

SAY, HERBERT! WHO'S THIS FRED HUNTER?

WHT, HE'S A FRIEND OF MINE, COOPER! HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR MONTHS...



OH! I'VE SEEN HIM WITH YOUR WIFE SEVERAL TIMES! JUST YESTERDAY! AS A MATTER OF FACT! YOU SAY YOU HAVEN'T SEEN HIM FOR A WHILE...

OH, YES? BY WIFE, EMP YOU SURE, COOPER? SANDRA NEVER MENTIONED IT! ARE YOU SURE IT WAS SANDRA?



WELL, REALLY, HERE! IF IT WAS JUST ONCE - IT MIGHT BE A MISTAKE! BUT I'VE SEEN THEM TOGETHER... OH... FIVE OR SIX TIMES!

HEH, HEH! WELL, FRED'S AN OLD FLAME OF SANDRA'S. THEY'RE PROBABLY JUST... FRIENDS... NOW!

NOW THAT THE SEED OF DOUBT IS PLANTED IN HERBERT DORSAY'S JEALOUS BRAIN...LET'S GO BACK ACROSS TOWN TO THE DORSAY PENTHOUSE, EH?

YOU'D BETTER GO NOW, FRED! NOT EVERYTHING STRAIGHT?

RIGHT? I KNOW THE SPOT! HE'LL NEVER KNOW WHAT HIT HIM! I'VE GOT, BABY!



SUDDENLY, AS HERBERT PASSES A DARKENED ALLEY, A SHADOWY FIGURE RUSHES AT HIM...A LENGTH OF HEAVY PIPE POISED...

WHAT THE...  
GOOD LORD!



HERBERT BEGINS TO RUN WILDLY DOWN THE DARK STREET. HIS ATTACKER CLOSE AT HIS HEELS! AS THEY DASH ACROSS AN INTERSECTION, A SPEEDING TRUCK SUDDENLY LOOMS BEFORE THEM...IT'S BRAKES SHRIeking...

LOOK OUT...



SOON AFTER FRED HUNTSON LEAVES THE DORSAY HOME, HERBERT LEAVES THE OFFICE BUILDING...

SURE I CAN'T GIVE YOU A LIFT, HERB?

NO, THANKS, COOPER! I ALWAYS WALK...



DOWN THE DARK DESERTED STREETS BETWEEN THE TOWERING SILENT BUILDINGS HERBERT DORSAY MOVES...THINKING...

SANDS...AND FRED! I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! COOPER MUST BE MISTAKEN! STILL...



SOMEHOW, HERBERT MANAGES TO SIDE-STEP THE ATTACK AND THE EMPTY SILENCE OF THE DESERTED STREET IS SHATTERED BY THE IMPACT OF THE METAL PIPE AGAINST THE STREETLIGHT POLE...



HERBERT DORSAY FRIGES, PANTING, AGAINST A BUILDING! THE CONFUSED TRUCK DRIVER GETS OUT OF HIS CAB! BEFORE THE BLOODSTAINED BUMPER OF THE TRUCK, BATHED IN THE BLINDING GLARE OF THE HEADLIGHTS, LIES A STILL FIGURE!

CRAZY POOL! RAN RIGHT IN FRONT OF ME!

IT...IT'S FRED HUNTSON! HE... HE TRIED TO KILL ME!



HIGH UP IN HER LUXURIOUS PENTHOUSE APARTMENT, SANDRA COMBAT SMILES TO HERSELF AS SHE LOULDS ON A CHAIRS- LOUNGE! "BY NOW SHE MURDER, IT'S ALL OVER!" SUDDENLY THE DOOR CRIES WIPE THE SMILE FROM HER LOVELY FACE...



FAR ACROSS THE SLEEPING CITY AN AMBULANCE SCREAMS INTO THE RECEIVING HAMP OF THE EMERGENCY WINGS OF A HOSPITAL AND WHINES TO A STOP! A WHITE-SHIRTED, BLOOD-STAINED FORM ON A STRETCHER IS REMOVED FROM THE TAWNING NEAR DOORS...



MEANWHILE SANDRA IS OPENING THE PENTHOUSE DOOR...



WHY, I, NO, NOBODY! IT'S JUST THAT YOU'RE ALL MURDERED... UP! WHAT...



...AS AT THE HOSPITAL...



...WHILE AT THE PENTHOUSE...



AND ACROSS TOWN, IN THE EMERGENCY WINGS OF THE HOSPITAL...



BUT, EXACTLY AT THAT MOMENT,  
IN THE CORSEY PENTHOUSE...



SANDRA STANDS OVER THE  
PROSTRATE FORM OF HER HUSBAND...



WHILE AT THE HOSPITAL, THE DOCTOR HAS JUST  
COVERED FRED HUNTSON'S FACE WITH THE SHEET



HEH, HEH! WHO WOULDN'T BE SHOCKED, EH, FIDDEE? HOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO WAKE UP IN **JONEBODY ELSE'S BODY?** YES! THE EXACT MOMENT THAT **FRED HUNTSON DIED**, HERBERT DORSAY WAS **MURDERED** BY HIS WIFE! BUT SOMETHING **STRANGE** WAS HAPPENED. SOMETHING **BEYOND** HERBERT DORSAY **ISN'T DEAD!** HE'S **ALIVE...** IN **FRED HUNTSON'S BODY!** ISN'T THIS AN **INTERESTING DEVELOPMENT?**



SOON THE POLICE ARRIVE AT THE DORSAY PENTHOUSE IN ANSWER TO SANDRA'S FRANTIC CALL...

HE TRIED TO **KILL ME... SOB!** I... ALL RIGHT, MRS. DORSAY! **CALM DOWN!** STRUCK HIM WITH THE **POKER!** TAKE IT EASY! I... I **DIDN'T MEAN TO HIT HIM** SO HARD... **SOB...**



THE NEIGHBORS CORROBORATE MRS. DORSAY'S STORY...

YES! WE HEARD THE **WHOLE THING!** SHE **SCREAMED** THE **BEAST!** HE WAS **BEATING** HER... **SHOOK HIM TO STOP!** SHE **WANT HAVE** **HELP** HIM...



SANDRA IS **BOOKED FOR** MAN-**SLAUGHTER** BUT IS **RELEASED ON BAIL!** IT IS **ALMOST CERTAIN** THAT A TRIAL WILL FIND THAT SHE **KILLED HERBERT** IN **SELF-DEFENSE!** MEAN-**WHILE** AT THE **HOSPITAL...**

TIME FOR YOUR **MEDICINE, MR. HUNTSON!** I... **HE'S GONE!**



DOCTOR! DOCTOR! **IMPOSSIBLE!** MR. HUNTSON...THE **PATIENT** IN **SOB!** HE'S **GONE...** HIS **BED'S EMPTY!** THE MAN WAS **HIT BY A** **STROKE!**



AT HER PENTHOUSE, SANDRA CALLS THE HOSPITAL...

I'M **CALLING** TO **FIND OUT** THE **CONDITION** OF A **MR. FRED HUNTSON!** I **UNDERSTAND** HE WAS **TAKEN...** **WHAT? ...GONE? ...BUT...**



SANDRA **OPENS** HER **PENTHOUSE DOOR!** THERE... **STANDING** IN A **POOL OF BLOOD...** I...

**FRED!** **NO, SANDRA!** YOU'RE **WIFED!**







**THE BROKEN BODY MOVES TOWARD HER...**

**"I'M HERBERT. YOUR HUSBAND."**

**"NO! NO! FRED! LISTEN TO ME! YOU'RE DELICIOUS."**



**"HERBERT'S DEAD, FRED? I KILLED HIM!" THE POLICE THINK IT WAS SELF-DEFENSE! WE'RE SAFE.**

**"FRED IS THE ONE WHO'S DEAD. I AM HERBERT... IN FRED'S BODY."**



**"KEEP AWAY FROM ME, FRED! KEEP AWAY! YOU'RE... YOU'RE MAD!"**

**"YOU THOUGHT YOU KILLED ME WHEN YOU STRUCK ME WITH THIS POWER... DON'T YOU, SANDRA?"**



**"POWER?" HOW DO YOU KNOW ABOUT THE POWER, FRED? HOW DO YOU... OH, LORD, NO!"**

**"YES, SANDRA! NOW YOU'RE DUMPAGED, AREN'T YOU? AND DON'T TRY TO GET MY GUN. THAT'S KEEP IN THE DEEP DRAWER..."**



**"OH, GOD! YOU ARE HERBERT! YOU ARE..."**

**"THAT'S WHAT I'VE BEEN TRYING TO TELL YOU ALL ALONG."**

**HIGH UP OVER EMMETT PARK AVENUE, FROM THE ELABORATELY FURNISHED PENTHOUSE APARTMENT OF HERBERT AND SANDRA CORLEY, COMES AN EAR-SPLITTING SHRIEK THAT ECHOES OVER THE DARK SILENT BUILDINGS, A SHRIEK OF A WOMAN IN THE THROTS OF DEATH.**



**"WELL, MEN! AND THAT'S MY TALE, DEAR FIVE FIVE! SANDRA TOOK A LITTLE CONFIRMING TO REALIZE THAT IT WAS REALLY HERBERT IN FRED'S BODY! THEN, SHE FINALLY GOT IT... BUT GODD... THEY FOUND SANDRA'S BODY... AND FRED'S TOO. STONE COLD DEAD! WELL, AFTER ALL, HOW LONG CAN A GUY WHO'S BEEN HIT BY A TRUCK LAST, ANYWAY? ON BY THE WAY! IF YOU WANT TO SEE HOW LONG YOU CAN LAST... JUST SEND FOR BACK ISSUES! THE INFORMATION ON HOW TO GET 'EM IS IN THE GUYFEE-KEEPER'S CORNER!"**



I'm a big fan o' yours, I came out from da fires of Hell just to read your mag. You've been comin' very popular, or so I heard. You're on show, cards, cards, and I heard about some toys coming out soon.



Bottom half of a smokin' sheet received here. Part of the signature was burned off. "Dark Demos..." Hm. Maybe it was "Dark Demosities." —CK

I enjoyed reading CRYPT number 7. "Reflection of Death!" was a neat idea, having the reader being the person in the story. But then they ruined the illusion by showing the face of the character and then giving him the name Al. The chances of the name of the reader being Al is rather remote, so it would have been better to refer to the character as "you."

The Feldman cover for CRYPT #8 seemed weak compared to the one that he did for #6. Those covers that require a talk balloon to carry them over are seldom as good as those (without) you have no doubt noticed that Jack Davis never had balloons in any of his cover illustrations. Davis seemed to be a very versatile artist as he did good work in the war and SF comics as well as in the horror mag.

Warren Standiford Sunnyvale, CA

I have a beach towel, watch, cup holder, posher, two shirts, a pen and the HBO TV show cards of you. I also have some issues of CRYPT. I think the story in #6 ("Scared to Death?") was great! Obviously yours.

Conry Goffin West Hartford, CT

P.S. I wrote this letter with the Crypt-Keeper pen.

You best you couldn't e-mail it through the CryptNet! —CK

It's good to see something new in the field of comic books today. I mean there are too many super heroes out there. That is why I like EC comics so much! They are my number one! So I give EC two skulls up!

Personally, the Crypt-Keeper is the best out of all three! Say hi to the Cryptler for me!

Eric Johnson Goldboro NC

I love every EC comic. I especially like your horror comics. I am planning to get the (hardback) COMPLETE CRYPT very soon because I think it is the best horror comic ever made.

Adam Owens Englewood, CO

I am a big fan of you and your show on HBO. If you have a fan club please please please send an application to join. I really, really, really, really would like to join.

Conry Agas Martinsville, VA

We don't operate a fan club, but other fans do! You should see The Vault-Keeper's "Fan Club News" page, which ran in HAUNT, INCREDIBLE SF and CRIME 9-1 last month! —CK

I noticed that "The Thing From The Sea!" in CRYPT #4 is almost identical to "The Upper Berth" By F. Marion Crawford, but no credit was given to him. He wrote it in the 1880s.

I see someone has already noticed the similarity between "The Death" and "White Powder." Also no credit was given. Is it not necessary in comic book stories?

Jack Barnes Dallas, TX

As we've indicated in these pages before, sometimes you borrow an idea and sometimes you borrow the plot it's stored in, too. And sometimes you remember to say thanks, and sometimes you don't. That's business. —CK

I have a question. At the beginning of your TV show you show the comic book the story is in, I was wondering if you have any of those comic books? The comic book with The Vault-Keeper's face, Old Witch's face and your face.

Chad J. Ben Peachtree City, GA



These are done just for the show. Miss Yeasberg did TV Crypt-Keeper at right. Compare to Jack Davis' portrait of me from CRYPT 17. —CK



I'm 12 years old and I never could find the CRYPT comic until I went to sleepaway camp to an outside mall. The comic store only had CRYPT 9.

I think that if you put more blood in your tales it would improve the comics. It would be more realistic.

Jon Salasch New York, NY

When I was 11, we didn't have time to shop at sleepaway camp 'cause we were fighting off predators! —CK

I love your comics! Your stories are wonderful! I love it at the end of your stories when you make funny comments.

Please print my address: people who like your comics can write to me, and I'll write back.

Reside 611, 14 years old 7 Park ST Shortsville, NY 14546

I love your tales. They're so creepy. Your spookier than The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch. How come in your show you're dead but in the comic you're not? Creepily yours,

Chris Drake Vineland, NJ

Why is the TV show on FOX is the Crypt-Keeper bald and has no skin when the one in the comic book is the total opposite?

Harold Craft Rockaway, NJ

I [am] a fan of your CRYPT reprints. I have also been a fan of the HBO show "Tales from the Crypt" for a while but the only thing from the show I don't like is The Crypt-Keeper. I expected him to be more like the comic books.

Raul Marston Houston, TX

I am a bit disturbed by your comments about the Crypt-Keeper's voice on the TV show and the cartoon (as mentioned in CRYPT #6). I can do several voice impersonations very well, but my favorite is the Crypt-Keeper's voice because I can do it excellently (although the laugh is tricky). So if the Crypt-Keeper ever needs a back-up vocalist, I'm hanging around! Any other horror-themed bolts and ghouls out there? I could use a pen pal, write to me. Pleasant screams.

Jarrod Brito (CK, Jr.) 8031 Anderson ST Thornton, CO 80229

HBO/FOO's CD is a victim of external forces and I have no argument with TY-Keeper's voice per se, but it isn't a certain no release event.



Hi I'm Trista. When I got done reading *CRUFT #7*, I loved it. Then I let my friend Tabbie read it. She said it was cool. My favorite story from it was "Voodoo Death." How old are you? This is my first letter. I hope you like it. Well, see you!

Total Withdrawals: 1000.00

1000

I am old enough to appreciate a well-written, well-spelled, logical letter from a young person, especially when that one is 50 years old! Congratulations! —CJ



I got my first EC comic a couple weeks ago. I'm 9 years old. I'm your #1 fan. My favorite story in the book is "Babe in My Belly". I agree with Jarid Brewer. Off sucks big time. They should take my advice and shoot WW right between the eyes. They should have an EC comic that only has you and your stories. I gotta go now.

**Abstract**

[illegible]

Bad rap! Shooting VC in the head doesn't even make him angry (it does get his attention). I know, I tried it. And I want my bullet back! —C

100

I love your show! I watch it whenever I can. I just got my first CRYPT comic and pack of cards. I love them! I brought them to school and everybody wanted to look at them! Me and my friend decided to start a Crypt Club! It will be amazing! I love your attitude! I can't believe my sister doesn't like you! I'm 11 years old.

100



Figure 1 consists of four bar charts, each representing a different category of respondents. The y-axis for all charts is 'Percentage of respondents' ranging from 0 to 100. The x-axis for all charts is 'Percentage of respondents' ranging from 0 to 100.

- (a) Respondents who are not members of any organization: The chart shows a single bar at 100%.
- (b) Respondents who are members of one or more organizations: The chart shows a single bar at 100%.
- (c) Respondents who are not members of any organization but are interested in joining one: The chart shows a single bar at 100%.
- (d) Respondents who are members of one or more organizations but are not interested in joining one: The chart shows a single bar at 100%.

10

My name is Matt Smith. I am ten years old. I wrote to you before. I have some questions to ask you. 1) Do you like Mental Asstest guys? 2) Are you rich? If you are could you send me a CRYPT coin? 3) Did you ever kill somebody? 4) Do you like to play sports? 5) Can you send me a picture of yourself? And sign your name on BT I know I am asking for a lot, but I want to read more. I want to

I have two more questions to ask you. A) What is your favorite animal? B) Do you like Beavis and Butt-head?

1000

1000

1) I like them, but foresee no long term relationships. 2) Sure, I'm rich! And, I got that way by NOT giving away money! 3) Someone pushed! 4) I played soccer for the NY Yankees football team in 1948. 5) Why should I learn to write just for you? A) I don't like to write. B) I don't just answer that? —C—

100

I just love your comics. My brother has [hardback?] books of you! My favorite issue is CRYPT #9. I would love a [pen?] Also, can you give me a free comic and I will give you a story called "The Switch." But you have to give me the comic first, ok?

**Abstract**

1000

Portugal, L. A., & W. A. W. W.

Blackwell, eh? Well, EC already has a story titled "The British" (see above), so you'll have to up the ante to add a frontier code and hat. **hah!** —C

100

I just read CRFT #9. It was cool! Two tales in that issue were adapted by the HBO series. My favorite tale from your magazine is "The Works in Wax!"

1000

100

You're the best out of the three. All your stories are the best. My favorite is "Bats in My Batty." What is your favorite? Well, tell them to keep making them cool.

1000

**Figure 1**

You are awesome! Just plain awesome! I love your comics. Actually, some of the stories are weird but I just don't care! He and my sister started collecting your comics. They're great! I've watched your show so many times!

[illegible]

Figure 1

<b>Department of Community Development</b> <b>Planning Unit</b> <b>1000 North 1st Street, Suite 200</b> <b>San Jose, CA 95131-2000</b>		<b>Form No. 100-100-100-100</b> <b>100-100-100-100</b> <b>100-100-100-100</b> <b>100-100-100-100</b>	
<b>1. Project Name:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>2. Project Number:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>3. Project Location:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>4. Project Status:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>5. Project Description:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>6. Project Objectives:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>7. Project Impact:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>8. Project Funding:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>9. Project Schedule:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>10. Project Contact:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>11. Project Approval:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>12. Project Review:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>13. Project Monitoring:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>14. Project Evaluation:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>15. Project Reporting:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>16. Project Archiving:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>17. Project Distribution:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>18. Project Access:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>19. Project Security:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>20. Project Privacy:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>21. Project Integrity:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>22. Project Confidentiality:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>23. Project Reliability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>24. Project Validity:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>25. Project Accuracy:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>26. Project Consistency:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>27. Project Completeness:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>28. Project Timeliness:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>29. Project Availability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>30. Project Usability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>31. Project Feasibility:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>32. Project Viability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>33. Project Sustainability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>34. Project Scalability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>35. Project Portability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>36. Project Interoperability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>37. Project Compatibility:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>38. Project Conformance:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>39. Project Compliance:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>40. Project Adherence:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>41. Project Conformity:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>42. Project Correspondence:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>43. Project Consistency:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>44. Project Coherence:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>45. Project Coherence:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>46. Project Cohesion:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>47. Project Cohesion:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>48. Project Unity:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>49. Project Unity:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>50. Project Integrity:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>51. Project Integrity:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>52. Project Reliability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>53. Project Reliability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>54. Project Validity:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>55. Project Validity:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>56. Project Accuracy:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>57. Project Accuracy:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>58. Project Consistency:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>59. Project Consistency:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>60. Project Completeness:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>61. Project Completeness:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>62. Project Availability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>63. Project Availability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>64. Project Usability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>65. Project Usability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>66. Project Feasibility:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>67. Project Feasibility:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>68. Project Viability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>69. Project Viability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>70. Project Sustainability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>71. Project Sustainability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>72. Project Scalability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>73. Project Scalability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>74. Project Portability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>75. Project Portability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>76. Project Interoperability:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>77. Project Interoperability:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>78. Project Compatibility:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>79. Project Compatibility:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>80. Project Conformance:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>81. Project Conformance:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>82. Project Compliance:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b>83. Project Compliance:</b> 100-100-100-100		<b>84. Project Adherence:</b> 100-100-100-100	
<b></b>			

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Byla Aggar	Wind Gap, PA
Jeff Blower	Meriden, CT
Bruce Laird	Enfield, GA
Jason Matlock	Old Forge, PA
Mike Prochaska	Massachusetts, MA
Ashley Robinson	Leahurst, IL
Steve Smith	San Francisco, CA
Rob Matlock	Woodward, PA, IL
Tom (The Farmer) Brakeman	San Ramon, CA
Steven Williams	Rockville, MD



Also available this month are **WORM SCIENCE** and **SHOCK**. Watch for **MAST**, **WORM FANTASY** and **TWO PISTERS** next month. Don't forget **MAST**, **RECREABLE SCIENCE FICTION** and **CRIME**. See them at your local comic book shop or (800) 449-9999 (see our ad in this month for details).

**BLACK HAZARD: CRYPT #1, \$3 each (subject to availability) and others up to \$100 each. #1, \$1.99 each. Issues #4 and up, \$3 each. Add \$6 per order (\$10 outside US) for S&H.**

Writing for  
 content  
 needs to be  
 clear and  
 concise. It should be

THIS COMIC REPRINTS  
TALES FROM THE GREAT "ONE" 1919 DETROIT RUN

COVER by Wally Wood  
 "Drown and Quartered!"  
 "The Borrowed Body!"  
 "Indian Burial Mound!"  
 "Satan's Bull!"

Jack Deery  
Howard Larkin  
George Houston  
Dorothy Woods

[illegible]

HERE'S A HAIR-RAISING TALE OF  
TERROR! I CALL THIS ONE...

# INDIAN BURIAL MOUND



WILLIAM-AL  
HID 14 DIESEL



OLD HIRAM BECKER RAISED HIS HAND TO SHADE HIS  
EYES FROM THE BLARING SUN AND GAZED DOWN THE  
DIRT ROAD AT THE CLOUD OF DUST MOVING TOWARD  
HIM...

WHEN? HERE COMES THAT  
DIFT FELLER WHO'S INTERESTED  
IN BUYIN' MY FARM! RIGHT  
ON TIME, TOO!

SOON A SLEEK, BUZZY AUTOMOBILE DREW UP AND A  
YOUNG MAN GOT OUT...

YOU THE FELLER WHAT  
CALLED ME ON THE  
PHONE 'BOUT BUYIN'  
THE FARM?

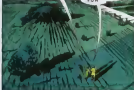
THAT'S RIGHT! YOU  
MUST BE HIRAM BECKER!  
MY NAME IS **NOT**  
MADISON.



HIRAM TURNED AND GESTICULATED TOWARD THE OPEN FIELDS AND THE RAMSHACKLE FARM HOUSE.

WELL, THAN SHE IS!  
WHAT DO YOU THINK?

PERFECT! EXACTLY  
WHAT I'M LOOKING  
FOR!



YOU MEAN YOU STILL  
WANT TO BUY 'EM?

OF COURSE! THE LISTING SAID  
YOUR ASKING PRICE WAS SEVEN  
THOUSAND DOLLARS! IS  
THAT CORRECT?



YEP! YOU CAN  
HAVE 'EM. LOOK,  
STOCK AND  
BARREL FOR  
THAT ANQUET!

GOOD! THEN  
IT'S A DEAL!  
SHALL WE GO  
UP TO THE  
HOUSE AND  
SIGN THE  
NECESSARY  
PAPERST?



HIRAM GOT INTO BOB'S CAR AND  
THEY DROVE UP THE DUSTY  
ROAD TO THE HOUSE.

SAY, YOUNG FELLER!  
WIND UP I ASK YOU  
A QUESTION!

GO AHEAD,  
OLD TIMER!



YOU'RE NO FARMER!  
I CAN TELL THAT!  
WHAT DO YOU WANT  
THIS OL' FARM FOR,  
ANYWAY?

I'M GOING  
TO TURN IT  
INTO AN  
AIRPORT  
AND FLY-  
ING SCHOOL.  
MR. BECKER!



AIRPORT! FLYING  
SCHOOL!

IT'S A PERFECT LOCATION.  
JUST OFF THE MAIN HIGHWAY.  
FIVE MILES FROM TOWN! AND  
LOOK AT IT! THE LAND IS  
PERFECT! ALMOST  
FLAT! EXCEPT FOR  
THAT SMALL HILL  
OUT THERE.



AND A BULL-DOZER  
WILL LEVEL THAT OFF  
IN JO TIME! HURRAH!

YOU HNT GONNA BULL-  
DOZE THAT INDIAN  
MOUND, MR. BECKER,  
ARE YOUT I WOULDNT  
ADVISE IT!





INDIAN MOUND?  
WHAT'S THAT?

IT'S A **SCORIAL**  
MOUND! THE INDIANS  
THAT ONCE ROAMED  
THESE FIELDS BURIED  
THEIR DEAD UNDER  
MOUNDS LIKE THAT  
ONE!



WELL...IT  
WILL HAVE  
TO GO!

I WOULDN'T TOUCH  
THAT MOUND IF I  
WERE YOU, MR. MAD-  
ISON! BEST MY FAN-  
TOM'S NO AROUND IT!  
THERE'S A **LEGEND**  
ABOUT THEM INDIAN  
MOUNDS!



ANYONE WHO VI-  
OLATES THE RESTING  
PLACE OF THE DEAD  
WILL BE PUNISHED  
BY THEIR SPIRITS!

SAH! THAT'S  
JUST IMAGINE!  
**SUPERSTI-  
TIOUS!** WELL,  
SHALL WE  
CONCLUDE  
OUR DEAL...



AND SO ROY MADISON AND WINAM BECKER SIGNED  
THE BILL OF SALE AND THE BECKER FARM WAS  
TURNED OVER TO ROY...

AND HERE'S YOUR CHECK, MR.  
BECKER! NOW, HOW SOON DO  
YOU THINK I CAN BEGIN MOV-  
ING IN MY EQUIPMENT?

WHY, ANYTIME,  
MR. MADISON! I...  
I'M WONDERING IF  
YOU'LL NEED A HAND  
TO **HELP** YOU FOR A  
WHILE.



YOU SEE! I HAVEN'T GOT NO  
FAMILY, AND I'LL NEED  
WORK TILL I RUN FIND  
ME A NEW FARM.

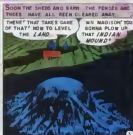
OKAY, BECKER! YOU CAN  
STICK AROUND! BUT  
REMEMBER! YOU'RE  
WORKING FOR ME,  
NOW!



THE NEXT DAY, THE LOUD ROAR OF A HUGE BULL-DOZER  
BOUNCED OVER ROY MADISON'S NEWLY ACQUIRED FARM.

WE'LL LEAVE THE **MOUND**  
STANDING FOR AWHILE TILL  
THE **LAND** IS CLEARED!

THAT THERE BULL-DOZER  
SHREW IS A POWERFUL  
PRICE OF MACHINERY.



SOON THE SHEDS AND BARN, THE FENCES AND  
TREES HAVE ALL BEEN CLEARED AWAY.

THERE! THAT TAKES CARE  
OF THAT! NOW TO LEVEL  
THE **LAND**.

MR. MADISON! YOU  
GONNA FLOW UP  
THAT **INDIAN**  
**MOUND**!



YES, SIR? JUST WATCH ME, HIRAM! JUST WATCH!

REMEMBER, MR. MADISON? I WARNED YOU!

THE HUGE BULL-DOZER ROARED AS ROY THREW HER INTO FORWARD GEAR! SLOWLY IT SORE DOWN UPON THE SMALL HIRE ON THE OTHERWISE FLAT LANDSCAPE...



HERE GOES YOUR INDIAN MOUND, HIRAM! ONCE AND FOR ALL!

COUGHING AND BARKING, THE BULL-DOZER'S POWERFUL TREADS SHOWED ITS SLEAMING FLOW INTO THE INDIAN MOUND.



...TORN UP TREMENDOUS CHUNKS OF BLACK SOIL AND FLUNG THEM AWAY.



...THEN SPATTERED TO A STOP HALF-WAY THROUGH THE ANCIENT BURIAL SITE!



WHAT IN BLAZES? SHE'S GONKED OUT!

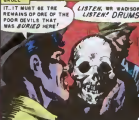
ROY DRUMS HIMSELF DOWN FROM THE DRIVER'S SEAT OF THE MECHANICAL MONSTER AS OLD HIRAM CAME ON THE RUN...



WHAT HAPPENED, MR. MADISON?

DON'T KNOW, HIRAM! SHE'S JUST DIED ON ME! SHE... GOOD LORD... LOOK!

ROY BENT AND PICKED UP A WHITEHED, GRIMING SKULL.



IT... IT MUST BE THE REMAINS OF ONE OF THE POOR DEVILS THAT WAS BURIED HERE!

LISTEN, MR. MADISON! LISTEN! DRUMS!



ROY AND HIRAM TURNED THEIR HEADS SKYWARD? FROM FAR OFF CAME THE SOUND OF TOM-TOMS THROBBING... PULSATING...

IT'S THE INDIAN SPIRITS? YOU'VE GOT 'EM RAILED UP?



DON'T BE FOOLING, HIRAM! THAT'S JUST HEAT LIGHT? HERE... IN THAT THUNDERHEAD UP THERE.

HIRAM TURNED WIDE-EYED TO THE SKULL IN ROY'S HAND.

I TOLD YUH, MR. MADISON! I TOLD YUH NOT TO PLOW UP THAT INDIAN BURIAL MOUND. NOW THEY'RE COMIN' COME AND BUT US...



HIRAM SPUN AND RAN WILDLY OUT ACROSS THE FIELD...

COME BACK, HIRAM. COME BACK?

NOT ME, MR. MADISON! I'M NOT STAYING AROUND HERE.



ROY WATCHED AS THE FLEEING HIRAM BECAME DISAPPEARED DOWN THE ROAD IN A CLOUD OF DUST? SUDDENLY A CLAP OF THUNDER EXPLODED OVERHEAD AND IT BEGAN TO RAIN? ROY PLUNGED THE BRIMMING BELL TO THE GROUND...



WHAT THE LUCK? FIRST THE BELL-DONOR COMES OUT AND NOW THIS? RAIN? I'LL HAVE TO GOVT FOR TODAY?

THEN ROY IMPULSED TO THE HOUSE JUST AS THE RAIN BEGAN TO FALL IN HEAVY SHEETS? HE SLAMMED THE DOOR AND CURSED? OUTSIDE IT WAS GETTING DARK.



SUPERSTITIOUS FOOL? AFRAID OF AN OLD LEGEND...

LATER, AS NIGHT CLOSED IN ON THE RAMSHACKLE FARM HOUSE, ROY SAT NEAR THE FIRE? OUTSIDE, THE RAIN BEAT INSISTENTLY ON THE ROTTED ROOF? SUDDENLY, THE DISTANT SOUND OF TOM-TOMS BEGAN AGAIN...



WHAT'S THAT? DRUMS? HAH! IT'S ONLY MY IMAGINATION? THE OLD MAN'S GOT ME JUMPY NOW?

BUT THE STEADY DRUMMING OF THE TOM-TOMS SEEMED TO DRAW CLOSER AND CLOSER TO THE OLD FARMHOUSE? ROY BEGAN TO SHIVER? FEAR CLUTCHED AT HIS HEART? A COLD CHILL RAN UP HIS SPINE? SUDDENLY THERE WAS A HEAVY POUNDING ON THE DOOR.



THUMP! THUMP!

SOMEONE OUTSIDE. SUERS, OLD HIRAM'S COME BACK?

ROY PLUNGED OPEN THE BATTERED DOOR AND DAZED OUTSIDE INTO THE BLACKNESS...

THAT YOU, HIRSH? I THOUGHT YOU'D THINK IT... OH MY GOD! NO! NO!



AMID THE STEADY THROBBERN OF THE RAIN CAME A CLEAR UNMISTAKABLE SOUND... THE BLOOD-CURLING SHRIEK OF ROY MADISON.

AAAAAAAAAAAAAGH!!



AS THE SUN ROSE OVER THE OLD FARM, THE SKY HAD CLEARED AWAY, AND THERE, PUDDLES OF WATER ATTESTED TO THE FACT THAT IT HAD RAINED ALL THAT NIGHT. A LONE FIGURE MOVED DOWN THE BLOODY ROAD...

I WONDER IF MR. MADISON'S *JOKE* AT ME? SURE I'M OUT OF A JOB.



IT WAS OLD HIRSH BECKER! HE CROSSED THE RAIN-SOAKED FIELD TOWARD THE HOUSE. SUDDENLY HE STOPPED AND STARED IN AMAZEMENT. THE BULL DOZER SAT SILENTLY IN A MUDDY PUDDLE NEAR THE INDIAN BURIAL MOUND. BUT THE MOUND...

THE INDIAN MOUND? IT'S BEEN REPAIRED? IT'S ALL BUILT UP AGAIN?



HIRSH TURNED TOWARD THE WATER-LOGGED HOUSE? IT STOOD DARK AND SOMBER IN THE MORNING SUNLIGHT. HE MOVED TOWARD IT... SWING OPEN THE BATTERED DOOR.

MR. MADISON? I... I GOOD LORD?



HIRSH STARED DOWN AT THE CRUMPLED FIGURE OF ROY MADISON STRETCHED OUT IN A DRIED POOL OF BLOOD ON THE DUSTY FLOOR. HE STIFFLED THE FEELING OF NAUSEA THAT SWIFT OVER HIM.

HOW... HORRIBLE! HE... HE'S BEEN SCALPED!



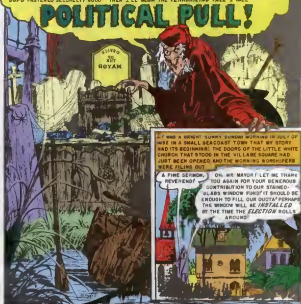
HELLOH? WELL... I TOLD YOU, ROOMS? I TOLD YOU THIS WAS A *HAIR-RAISING* TALE. HOW HAIR-RAISING CAN ONE GET? ONLY THE WAY. KNOW ANYBODY THAT'S LOOKING FOR A FARM? HIRSH BECKER'S IS STILL FOR SALE. ONLY ONE THING'S RIGHT ON IN THE MIDDLE OF IT IS AN INDIAN BURIAL MOUND. IF YOU'VE GOT A CUSTOMER FOR IT, WOULD EITHER TELL HIM NOT TO TRY TO LEVEL IT? OR ELSE HE MIGHT BE LEVELLED BY A *FOUR-SHANK*. OH, DON'T FORGET TO READ THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER. AND NOW, THE OLD BITCH WILL ENTERTAIN YOU.



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YEP! THE FIRE'S CRACKLING UNDER MY CAULDRON! THE EVIL, BREN, BURLING AND BURLING, IS JUST ABOUT FINISHED! COME IN! COME INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR! I AM YOUR MOTHER - THE OLD WITCH, .. READY TO DISH OUT ANOTHER OF MY DELICIOUS MORSELS OF MADNESS! GOT YOUR BROOD- GUFFS FASTENED SECURELY? GOOD! THEN I'LL BEGIN THE TERRORIZING TALE I CALL

## POLITICAL PULL!



IT WAS A BRIGHT, SUNNY SUMMER MORNING IN JULY OF 1922 IN A SMALL SEACOAST TOWN THAT MY STORY HAD ITS BEGINNING! THE DOORS OF THE LITTLE WHITE CHURCH THAT STOOD IN THE VILLAGE SQUARE HAD JUST BEEN OPENED AND THE WORKING WORKSHIPPERS WERE FILING OUT.

A FINE SERMON, REVEREND!

OH, MR. MAYOR? LET ME THANK YOU AGAIN FOR YOUR GENEROUS CONTRIBUTION TO OUR STAINED-GLASS WINDOW FUND! IT SHOULD BE ENOUGH TO FILL OUR QUOTA! PERHAPS THE WINDOW WILL BE INSTALLED BY THE TIME THE ELECTION ROLL ROUNDS AROUND!

THINK NOTHING OF IT, REVEREND! I ONLY WISH I COULD HAVE GIVEN MORE! BUT, AS YOU KNOW, BEING AN HONEST POLITICIAN DOES NOT MAKE A MAN RICH!

AND THAT IS WHY YOU HAVE BEEN RE-ELECTED SO OFTEN, MAYOR FULTON! BECAUSE THE TOWNFOLK KNOW YOU ARE AN HONORABLE MAN!



WHENVILLE, NEARBY: CYRUS MARGATE, MAYOR JED FULTON'S OPPONENT IN THE COMING ELECTION, STUMBLED TO HIMSELF.

WHY? LOOK AT MY **RIGHTS** OLD STUFF! SHORT! THREE TIMES HE'S BEATEN ME FOR THE MAYORALTY! THREE TIMES! BUT THIS TIME THIS TIME WILL BE DIFFERENT...



AFTER THE USUAL TOWN MEETINGS AND CLE CHATTER WAS FINISHED, MAYOR FULTON MADE HIS WAY HOME.

MAYOR FULTON: AH, MY I'VE BEEN WAITING FOR YOU! WORTHY OPPONENT... MR. MARGATE!

COULD I TO HAVE A TALK WITH YOU, SIR? IT'S VERY IMPORTANT!

WHY NOT HAVE LUNCH WITH WITH ME, MR. MARGATE? MY SERVANT HAS THE DAY OFF... AND TO WELCOME THE COMPANY!

I'D BE DELIGHTED TO, SIR! ARE YOU SURE...

NO TROUBLE, MARGATE! NO TROUBLE AT ALL! WHILE WE ARE DRINK, WE CAN TALK.



LATER, AFTER THE TWO POLITICAL OPPONENTS HAD EATEN A HEARTY MEAL, LAUGHING ABOUT PAST ELECTIONS, MR. MARGATE PROPOSED A TOAST.

LET'S DRINK TO THIS ELECTION, JED! I KNOW I CAN'T BEAT YOU...

NONSENSE, CYRUS! YOU CAN'T TELL.



CYRUS DREW A SMALL SQUARE OF FOLDED PAPER FROM HIS POCKET AND EMPTIED THE CONTENTS INTO THE MAYOR'S DRINK.

MAYBE THIS TIME WILL BE YOUR CHANGE, CYRUS!

MAYBE, MR. MAYOR! MAYBE YOU'RE RIGHT!





AFTER CAREFULLY REMOVING ANY TRACES OF HIS HAVING VISITED THE MAYOR'S HOUSE, CYRUS MANHATE SLIPPED OUT... UNSEEN.

HEH, HEH! WELL, JED! I GUESS THIS CHECKS **MY ELECTION** AND **SAVES YOUR SPOT-LESS REPUTATION**

I HEARD THE SOUND THE DRAFT FROM THE DOOR SWIFT. THE SUICIDE NOTE AND THE POISON PACKET FELL FROM THE TABLE

THEY FLEW ACROSS THE ROOM, COMING TO REST NEAR HEATHA'S BOOK-CASE...

WELL, NEH? TEF? OTHER'S PLAN GOT FOILED! THE OLD BAR OF WHO DIDN'T COUNT ON A **BLIND! BRIDGE!** ANYWAY, WHEN THE SEAVANT DISCOVERED MARION FULTON'S BODY... AND THE SUICIDE NOTE WAS NOT FOUND WITH IT... AN AUTOPSY WAS PERFORMED.

HE'S BEEN POISONED? IT...IT'S MURDER!

WHO...WHO COULD HAVE DONE IT? THE WHOLE TOWN LOVED AND RESPECTED HIM!

OH, WHAT A FUNERAL THEY GAVE POOR MARION FULTON! EVERYBODY IN THE TOWN TURNED OUT TO MOURN HIS PASSING.

HE WAS A GOOD MAN!

THE BEST MAYOR THIS TOWN EVER HAD!

WE'LL GET THE SCUM THAT DID THIS!

CYRUS WAS AT THE FUNERAL, TOO! THERE WERE MANY SUSPECTING GLANCES THROWN IN HIS DIRECTION.

I...I CAN'T UNDERSTAND IT! THEY DIDN'T FIND THE SUICIDE NOTE! WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED...

AND NOW WE COMMIT HIS BODY TO ITS FINAL RESTING PLACE...

TWO DAYS AFTER THE FUNERAL, AS THE LOCAL POLICE WERE INVESTIGATING THE MAYOR'S DEATH...

LET'S LOOK AT THIS! I FOUND IT UNDER THE BOOK-CASE! WHY, IT'S A SUICIDE NOTE! IT MUST HAVE FALLEN OFF THIS TABLE...

AT FIRST, THE TOWNSFOLK WERE SHOCKED AT THE NEWS THAT THE MAYOR'S DEATH WAS A SUICIDE.

I DON'T BELIEVE IT!

WHY SHOULD WE DO SUCH A THING?

THE POLICE SAY THE NOTE CONFESSED STEALING

SOON, HOWEVER, CYRUS MARRATE HAD WORKED THE SHOCK INTO ANGER...

AND WE TRUSTED HIM ALL THESE YEARS! BELIEVED IN HIM! NEVER DOUBTED HIS HONESTY!! AND NOW HE LIES THERE, AMONG DECENT PEOPLE, IN THE CHURCH BURIAL GROUND? ARE YOU GOING TO STAND FOR THAT? ARE YOU?

HE COMMITTED SUICIDE! THAT'S A SIN! HE DON'T GET BELONG IN OUR CEMETERY...

FEAR! THAT'S RIGHT! SUICIDE'S A SIN... OUT.

ALL THESE YEARS, POSING AS AN UPSTANDING, GOD-FEARING MAN

AND ALL THE TIME STEALIN'.

THE ANGRY CROWD WENT TO THE CEMETERY, SHOOTING HIM BY THE MARRATE. WELL, TODAY, ANY NO ROOM IN THE 'OUR BURYIN' GROUND FOR A SINNER...



ANXIOUS HANDS WIELDED SPADES AND SHOVELS, DIGGING UP THE FRESH GRAVE.

THERE! YOU'VE STRUCK! LET'S GET THE COFFIN.

LET'S GET THE COFFIN. ROPES ON IT AND HAUL 'EM UP!



THE COFFIN WAS CARRIED TO THE WATERFRONT, WHERE IT WAS WRAPPED IN CHAINS TO WEIGHT.

THERE! THAT OUGHT TO SINK FAST!

PUT IT ABOARD! WE'LL TAKE 'EM OUT AND DUMP 'EM!



THE WEIGHTED COFFIN CONTAINING THE REMAINS OF JED FULTON WAS TAKEN OUT TO SEA AND THROWN OVERBOARD.

DNC TWO...THREE-E-E-E-E!

GOOD  
HISDAH!

AT ELECTION TIME, CYRUS MARGATE WAS UNOPPOSED!  
HE WAS GRACIOUSLY ELECTED...MAYOR.

HEH HEH! NOW I HAVE EVERYTHING  
I WANT! EVERYTHING I'VE WANTED  
FOR TWELVE YEARS.

...AND RIGHTeous OLD JED  
FULTON'S NAME HAS BEEN  
FORGOTTEN! NOW HE  
LIES AT THE BOTTOM OF THE  
SEA. NOT GOOD ENOUGH  
TO BE BURIED IN THE CHURCH  
CEMETERY.

AND SO, THE YEAR PASSED!  
THE TOWN SOON FORGOT JED  
FULTON! ONE WARM SUMMER DAY.

HONKY, MAYOR!

HONKY, GLENN!  
LIKE TO COME  
ALONG? I'M  
GONNA FISH!

SORRY, MAYOR!  
MARTHA'S WAITIN'  
ON ME! I GUESS  
YOU'LL WANT  
A ROW-BOAT!

WELL? I AIM TO  
CATCH ME A  
MESS OF  
FISHES!

WHEN MAYOR CYRUS MARGATE HAD REACHED HIS  
FAVORITE FISHING SPOT, HE TOSSED OVER THE  
ANCHOR! AFTER AN HOUR, WITH NO BITES, HE  
LOOKED AROUND.

HMMM! FISH AIN'T BITIN'! LOOKS  
LIKE A STORM COMIN'! I'D  
BETTER GO OUT FOR TODAY!

CYRUS BEGAN TO HAIL AT THE ANCHOR ROPE! THE  
ANCHOR REFUSED TO COME UP! IT WAS STUCK.

THAT'S FUNNY! THAT THERE'S A  
SANDY BOTTOM! AIN'T NO ROCKS  
DOWN THERE! UGH!



AS CYRUS STRUGGLED WITH THE ANCHOR ROPE, HE KNOCKED THE OARS OVERBOARD...

WHY? I... I... BLAST IT!  
THERE GO THE OARS!



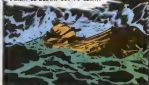
SOON THE FULL FURY OF THE STORM LASHED AT THE TINY ROWBOAT! IT TOSSED AND BOWLED ABOUT! CYRUS STARED AT THE TORN ANCHOR ROPE...

I CAN'T UNDERSTAND WHAT IT'S DOING!  
OH... BUT ANYWAY I HOPE IT HELDS!  
I... I... WHAT'S THAT?



THE WIND BEGAN TO BLOW AND THE SKY DARKENED! CYRUS CURSED HIS CLAIMEDNESS AT HAVING LOST HIS OARS...

IT'D BETTER NOT OUF MYSELF AGAINST!  
I WANT BE BLOWN OUT TO SEA...



CYRUS HAD DAUGHTER LIGHT OF SOMETHING WHITE JUST BELOW THE SURFACE OF THE WATER NEAR THE ANCHOR ROPE! HE STARED INTO THE DARKNESS! SUDDENLY HE GASPED! A ROTTED HAND REACHED UP OVER THE SIDE OF THE STORM-TOSSED ROWBOAT.

GOOD LORD! WHO... WHO ARE YOU?



SUDDENLY THE FOUL-SMELLING STENCH OF WATER-ROTTED FLESH SCARED CYRUS! HOSTILIS! A FISH-PITTED PAGE APPEARED... THEN A ROTTED NECK... DELAYED SHOULDERS...

NO! NO! NO!  
CAN'T BE...



A WHITERED HAND SHOT FORWARD, GRASPING CYRUS BY THE LEG! THEN THE THING BEGAN TO PULL! THE THING WAS STRONG! CYRUS COULDN'T HOLD ON! HE FELT HIMSELF SLID... HIS OVERBOARD...

JED! LET ME GO! LET ME GO!

EEAAAAAGH!



AND SO, WITH A WHIRL AND A GULP, MY STORY ENDS! POOR CYRUS! HE DIDN'T END UP IN THE NICE, NEAT LITTLE CEMETERY BEHIND THE SMALL WHITE CHURCH, EITHER! WELL... IT'S LIKE ONE OF THE TOWNFOLK SAID! THERE WASN'T ROOM THERE FOR SUMMERS! WHAT'S THAT? WHAT ABOUT JED? HE WAS NO SUMMER! OH, BUT HE WAS! THOSE THINGS IN THE SUDDEN NOTE WERE TRUE! OMOH! DO YOU EVER MEET AN HONEST POLITY-CLAMP HEE, HEE!



**HEE-HEE! I'M GOING TO DO  
LIKE THESE TWO GOOFY  
GHOULUNATICS, AND GET MY  
OWN SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ALL  
THE EC COMICS!**



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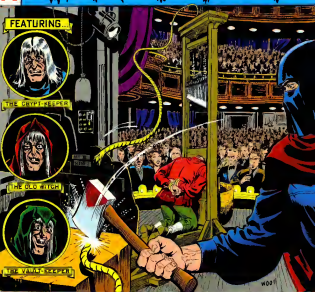
THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAMPIROGRAPH



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! SO YOU'RE BACK FOR MORE, EH? SO YOU LIKE HORROR STORIES, EH? WELL, I'VE GOT A LITTLE TALE ABOUT PEOPLE WHO LIKE HORROR THAT WILL WARM YOUR COLD HEARTS! YES, IT'S ME... THE CRYPT-KEEPER... YOUR HOST IN THE CRYPT OF TERROR! COME IN! JUST DRAG OVER THAT BUNLAP BAG AND SIT DOWN! IT'S WIDE AND SOFT! THE CORPSE IN IT ISN'T QUITE STIFF YET! COMFY! GOOD? NOW LISTEN TO THE TERROR-TALE I TELL.

## WELL-COOKED HAMS!



THE HUNCHBACK COWERED BEFORE THE RED-HOT STOVE, A BOTTLE OF ACID RAISED MEANINGLY IN HIS WARTY HAND! THE SHAGGY-HAIRED UGLY MAN MOVED TOWARD THE TERRORIZED HUNCHBACK, REACHING FOR HIS NECK...

I'M GOING TO CHOP! YOU! YOU TWISTED LITTLE MONSTER!

KEEP AWAY FROM ME! THIS IS ACID I HAVE! IF YOU RASHON ME, I'LL...



THE WILD LOOKING MAN'S STONE FINGERS CLOSED ON THE HUNCHBACK'S THROAT! SUDDENLY HE SCREAMED IN PAIN! THE HUNCHBACK HAD FLUNG THE CONTENTS OF THE ACID BOTTLE INTO HIS FACE...



SHRIeking HISTERICALLY, THE SHABBY ONE FLUNG THE HUNCHBACK'S FACE DOWN UPON THE BLOWING TOP OF THE RED-HOT STOVE! THE HUNCHBACK HOWLED! A HISsing SOUND WAS HEARD AND A CLOUD OF SMOKE AROSE FROM THE BURNING FLESH...



SUDDENLY THE ENTIRE SCENE WAS FLOTTED OUT BY A FLASH OF RED VELVET! AS THE CURTAIN CLOSED! A GASP ERUPTED FROM THE INROCKED AUDIENCE! THEN A TUMULT OF APPLAUSE EXPLODED!



THE CURTAIN PARTED AND THE HUNCHBACK STEPPED FORWARD, HIS FACE CHARRED! THEN THE SHABBY HAIRIED MAN CAME OUT, HIS FACE HORRIBLY DISFIGURED BY THE ACID BURNS! THEY BOWED TO THE CHEERING PLAY-GOERS...



AS THE ENTHUSIASTIC CROWD MOVED TOWARD THE EXITS, BABBING... TWO AMERICANS REMAINED IN THEIR SEATS...

FRANKMOROS, MILES! THE MOST AMAZING DISPLAY OF HORROR I HAVE EVER SEEN!



THE TWO MEN STARED UP AT THE RED-VELVET DRAWN CURTAIN...

I WANTED YOU TO SEE IT! I KNEW YOU'D LIKE IT! DO YOU THINK THEY'D GO FOR IT BACK IN THE UNITED STATES?

ARE PARISHANS ANY DIFFERENT THAN NEW YORKERS, MILES? MRS. B. WATER WOULD GO MAD OVER THIS STUFF!



THERE'S ONLY ONE THING, ARTHUR! THE HORROR EFFECTS OF THE BRAND BURNING AND ALL CLOSELY GUARDED SECRETS!

I'M SURE WE CAN MAKE A DEAL WITH THEM, MILES! O-H-O-H! HERE COMES MRS. B. WATER. THE OWNER!



THE TALL, GAUNT, PALEFACED  
FRENCHMAN APPROACHED THE  
TWO AMERICANS.

I BELIEVE YOU  
ARE THE TWO  
AMERICANS  
WHO CALLED  
ME?

THAT'S RIGHT,  
M'SIEUR MATIER!  
I AM MILES  
ANDISH, AND  
THIS IS ARTHUR  
MACK!



COME INTO MY  
OFFICE, GENTLE-  
MEN! YOU SAW  
THE PERFORM-  
ANCE?

YES! WE  
DID!  
IT WAS  
TERRIFIC!



THE THEATER OWNER LED THE  
TWO MEN INTO A SMALL  
OFFICE AND MOTIONED THEM  
TO BE SEATED.

I AM GLAD YOU  
LIKED IT, GENTLE-  
MEN! NOW, WHAT  
CAN I DO FOR  
YOU?

WELL, MATHIEU,  
WE WOULD  
LIKE TO PRO-  
DUCE THE  
GRAND GUENOL  
PLAYS  
IN AMERICA!



DON'T YOU THINK THE  
GRAND GUENOL  
WILL BE AS SUCCESS-  
FUL IN AMERICA  
AS IT IS HERE IN  
PARIS?

WE'RE SURE OF IT!  
HORROR IS SWEEPING  
THE COUNTRY BACK  
THERE! THEY EVER  
HAVE IT IN COMEDY  
BOOKS?



I AM SORRY, GENTLEMEN!  
I DO NOT THINK WE CAN  
DO BUSINESS! IT IS  
IMPOSSIBLE!

WE CAN OFFER YOU  
A GOOD PRICE,  
M'SIEUR MATIER!  
WHAT IS YOUR  
OBJECTION?



THE GRAND GUENOL WAS  
STARTED BY MY FATHER,  
PIERRE MATIER! THE  
METHODS WE USE IN PRO-  
DUCING THE HORRIBLE  
EFFECTS IN OUR PLAY  
WERE INVENTED BY HIM,  
AND HAVE BEEN JEALOUSLY  
GUARDED EVER SINCE!  
ONLY I KNOW THEM! EVEN  
THE ACTORS HERE DO NOT  
KNOW HOW THEY ARE DONE!

AND THE  
SECRETS  
ARE ALL  
IN YOUR  
HEAD,  
W'ERE?



OH, NO! REMEMBERING THEM  
WOULD BE MUCH TOO DIFFI-  
CULT! NO! THEY ARE ALL  
WRITTEN DOWN IN A MANU-  
SCRIPT WHICH I KEEP IN  
THAT SAFE! NOW, IF YOU  
WILL EXCUSE ME, THE  
RIGHT'S RECEIPTS  
AWAIT!

ER, YES!  
WELL, THANK  
YOU ANYWAY,  
M'SIEUR! I'M  
SORRY YOU WILL  
NOT CONSIDER  
OUR OFFER! BUT  
GOOD!







THE NEXT MORNING, AT LE BOURGET AIRPORT JUST OUTSIDE PARIS, MILES BROWN AND ARTHUR WACK BOARDED A TRANSATLANTIC CONSTELLATION! MILES CLUTCHED THE PREVIOUS MANUSCRIPT UNDER HIS ARM!



I WONDER IF THEY'VE STARTED  
FOUND HIS BODY YET?

SHUT UP  
YOU FOOL!

WACK

AND AS THE GIANT AIRLINER ROSE GENTLY INTO THE SKY ABOVE FRANCE, IN THE OFFICE OF THE GRAND COMMISSAIRE THEATRE IN LE RUE CHATEAU, MONTMARTE...



EEEEEEEEEK!

WHILE ON THE PLANE

IT'S ALL HERE, MILES! EVERYTHING FLOOT!

SO THAT'S  
HOW THEY  
MAKE THE  
BLOOD POUR  
OUT OF THE  
WOUND!



YES! AND LOOK HERE! THE STABBING SCENE! A DETAILED DRAWING OF HOW THE KNIFE IS CONSTRUCTED!

THERE'S THE EYE-BOROWING ACT! WELL, I'LL BE!



HERE! ON THIS PAGE! THE AGG AND RED-HOT STOVE ILLUSION!

WE'RE SET, ARTHUR! WE'LL KNOW 'EM DEAD ON BROADCAST!



BUT WE'VE GOT TO KEEP ALL THIS A SECRET, MILES! NO ONE ELSE MUST EVER KNOW HOW THESE HORROR EFFECTS ARE PRODUCED!

WE MUSTN'T TAKE THE CHARGE OF LETTING THIS ROCK OUT OF OUR HANDS!



LISTEN! WE'RE BOTH ACTORS! WE'VE MEMORIZED WHOLE SCRIPTS BEFORE! WE'LL MEMORIZE THIS MANUSCRIPT AND THEN DESTROY IT!

GOOD IDEA! THEN WE WON'T LEAVE OURSELVES OPEN TO THE KIND OF TRICKS POOR M'HEU WAYNE DID!



AND SO, WHEN THE TRANSATLANTIC AIRLINER LANDED AT IDLEWILD AIRPORT IN NEW YORK CITY...

YOU GO TO YOUR HOTEL ROOM AND START MEMORIZING THE MANUSCRIPT, ARTHUR! I'LL SEE ABOUT HIRING A THEATER!

RIGHT! GOOD LUCK!



WHILE, BACK IN PARIS...

WHAT DOES IT SAY, CHARLES?

IT SAYS 'CLOSED BECAUSE OF DEATH OF OWNER' AH? THAT IS TOO BAD, EH?



A WEEK LATER, IN NEW YORK...

WELL, ARTHUR! I'VE FINISHED MEMORIZING NOW THE MANUSCRIPT, TOO!

GOOD! LET'S DESTROY IT... TOGETHER!



THE MANUSCRIPT OF PIERRE MATIER WAS THROWN INTO THE FIRE, AND THE TWO MEN WATCHED THE LEAPING FLAMES REDUCE IT TO BLACK ASHES...

WELL THAT DOES AND WE IT, ARTHUR! NOW OPEN IN THE GRAND GUN-NOL'S SECRETS ARE OURS ALONE!



WHILE IN PARIS, AT THE POLICE MORGUE...

POOR! MATIER'S BODY HAS BEEN STOLEN!

NON! DIENT!



IN NEW YORK, ADVANCED PUBLICITY ON THE OPENING OF THE *BACK AGAIN HORROR THEATER* BROUGHT LINES OF PEOPLE TO THE BOX OFFICE...

I'VE READ ABOUT THE GRAND GUN-NOL IN PARIS!

THEY SAY THIS WILL BE FAR MORE HORRIBLE!

THEY'RE SOLD OUT FIVE WEEKS IN ADVANCE!



AND THEN, THE NIGHT OF THE PREMIER PERFORMANCE ROLLED AROUND! IN A DRESSING ROOM, ARTHUR AND MILES RERVOUSLY APPLIED THEIR MAKE-UP...

REMEMBER, ARTHUR! WHEN I THROW THE ACID IN YOUR FACE... SCREAM!

DON'T WORRY! AND WHEN I PLURGE YOUR FACE ON THE RED-HOT STOVE... YOU LET OUT A BLOOD-CURDLER, TOO!



THE AUDIENCE FILLED EVERY AVAILABLE SEAT/STANDING ROOM WAS SOLD OUT! THE THEATER WAS FILLED TO CAPACITY! FINALLY, THE CURTAIN WENT UP AND THE PERFORMANCE BEGAN.



UHP! OUCH! HOW HORRIBLE!

ARTHUR AND MILES STOOD IN THE ROWS, WATCHING... ARTHUR GRESSED AS THE GARBED THROTTLED, AND MILES AS THE STOOPEE MUNCHBACK...



THE AUDIENCE IS SHOCKED! WHY NOT? THEY NEVER EXPECTED THE EFFECTS TO BE SO REAL...

THE STABBING SCENE WAS OVER! THEN CAME THE RYE-SQUING EFFECT! FINALLY...

THERE'S OUR OUT, ARTHUR! LET'S GO! GOT THAT BOTTLE WITH THE SECRET FORMULA?



MILES DASHED OUT ONTO THE STAGE! THE AUDIENCE GASPED! ARTHUR FOLLOWED! HE WAS TOWARDS MILES, MENACINGLY...

KEEP AWAY! KEEP AWAY! I'M GOING TO CRASH YOU, YOU TWISTED LITTLE MONSTER!



THIS IS AKA I HAVE IN THIS BOTTLE! IF YOU TOUCH ME, I'LL...

WRY, YOU LITTLE...



MILES PLUNGED THE SECRET FORMULA INTO ARTHUR'S FACE! ARTHUR SCREAMED...



ARTHUR SHOWN MILES'S FACE DOWN ON THE 'RED-HOT' PROP-STOVE! MILES SCREAMED, DRIVING HYSTERICALLY!



POW! OUT IT OUT! YOU'RE OVER-HEATING!

EEEEEE

THE AUDIENCE STARED IN HORROR AS THE TWO FIGURES SHRINKED IN PAIN...



IT, IT LOOKS SO REAL!

I DON'T FEEL SO GOOD!

WAIT! SOME-THING'S WRONG!

ARTHUR, HIS FACE HORRIBLY DISTORTED BY THE BURNING ACID, SUDDENTLY RELEASED HIS HOLD ON MILES... WHOSE CHEEK LAY SQUEEZING AGAINST THE RED-HOT STOVE! BUT AS THE CURTAIN CLOSED, THEY CONTINUED TO SCREAM!



OWWWW! THE PAIN...

AAAAHH!

WHAT'S WRONG?

A MEMBER OF THE CAST RUSHED TO THEM! THEY LAY WRITHING ON THE STAGE.



GOOD LORD! THEIR FACES! THEY'RE REALLY BURNED!

THE ECCLAMATION CARRIED THROUGH THE DRAWN CURTAIN TO THE HORRIFIED AUDIENCE OUTSIDE...



THEY'RE DYING!

DID YOU HEAR THAT? IT WAS REAL!

MY GOD!

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

THE PANICKY AUDIENCE RUSHED FOR THE EXITS... SHOUTING... PUSHING... SHOVING! BY MISTAKE, SOMEONE OPENED THE CURTAIN! ARTHUR AND MILES LAY PROSTRATE ON THE STAGE...



LOOK! THEY'RE DEAD!

HURRY!

STOP PUSHING! WE'LL BE TRAMPLED!

SOON, THE THEATRE WAS EMPTY! ONLY A LONG POLINE SAG IN THE DESERTED HOUSE... STANDING UP AT THE TWO DEAD MEN ON THE STAGE.



AND AS WE CLOSE IN, WE SEE THAT THE POLINE IS JARLING AS HE STARES UP AT THE STAGE WITH GLAZED EYES! IT IS THE COMPLEX OF MURDER MATHS.



THE END

WELL, WELL! THAT WAS A NOT DARE, EH? I HOPE YOU LIKED THE PERFORMANCE! THE STORY CERTAINLY HAD A SHIFTLING CLIMAX, EH? ARTHUR AND MILES WERE ALL BURNED UP ABOUT IT! TOO BAD THEY DIDN'T HAVE A CHANCE TO SAVE FACE! YOU CAN SAVE BACK ISSUES! IF MY MAD MAN, THAT IS! READ MY COLUMN.



THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER FOR INFO ON HOW TO GET FURRY! AND NOW, WHY NOT TURN TO THE PAGE? - KEEPER FOR ANOTHER HARMING TALE!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEY, HEY! SO, IT'S MY TURN TO ENTERTAIN YOU NOW, EMT BOOBY! I'VE BEEN WAITING! COME INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR! I AM YOUR HOST, FINE PAUL FREEMER! I'VE JUST PAINTED THAT CARPET WITH BLOOD, SO GET DOWN ON IT! THEN YOU WON'T HIT THE CEILING WHEN I TELL YOU THE BLOOD-CURLING TALE I CALL...

## MADAM BLUEBEARD



FOR THE BEGINNING OF OUR STORY, LET'S LOOK IN ON A PATHETIC SCENE... A FUNERAL... IN A CEMETERY. AS THE GROUP OF BLACK-CLAD MOURNERS BATHED IN THE SOBBING WIDOW WAIL... THE COFFIN OF THE RECENTLY DECEASED IS LOWERED INTO THE YAWNING BLACK PIT! SAD, ISN'T IT? FEEL SORRY FOR THE POOR WIDOW? DON'T! NOTICE THE HEAT LINE OF GRAVES BEHIND THE NEW ONE? COUNT THEM! YES, THERE ARE 50 OTHERS! THIS POOR WOMAN IS BURYING HER SEVENTH HUSBAND! IS THERE ANY WONDER I'VE CHRISTENED HER 'MADAM BLUEBEARD'? AFTER ALL, SHE KILLED THEM ALL...



OH, YES! THAT'S WHAT EVERYONE BELIEVES! THAT TERESA'S SEVEN HUSBANDS ALL DIED ACCIDENTALLY! EVEN HER HUSBANDS BELIEVED IT. THAT IS, ALL EXCEPT FREDDY. THE ONE THEY'RE BURNING NOW! HE KNOWS DIFFERENT! OR I SHOULD SAY 'KNOWN' DIFFERENT! AH, BUT I'M GETTING AHEAD OF MY STORY...

'FOUR' 'FOUR' THAT'S A GIRL! 'LAUGH' SHE'S LOADED! HER SEVEN HUSBANDS' ESTATES AMOUNT TO A TIDY SUM! WHY...



'NEAL, THE FOURTH, FELL FROM HIS OFFICE WINDOW... FOURTEEN STORIES'



WHY IF I DIDN'T THINK TERESA WAS A JOKE... I'D MARRY HER MYSELF! BUT I'D PROBABLY END UP LIKE ALL THE OTHERS... IN SOME FREAK ACCIDENT!

THE OTHERS? HOW DID THEY DIE?



'HOWARD, TERESA'S SECOND, FELL OFF A CLIFF WHILE THEY WERE HONEYMOONING IN A TRAILER...'



'WELL, LET'S SEE! EARL WAS HER FIRST! IT HAPPENED ABOUT THREE MONTHS AFTER THEY WERE MARRIED! EARL HAD PROBABLY FALLEN ASLEEP WHILE FISHING! HIS BOAT DRIFTED INTO THE RAPIDS AND HE WAS KILLED SOME OVER THE FALLS...'



'DOUGLAS, NUMBER THREE, WAS KILLED ON A HUNTING TRIP! HIS GUN EXPLODED IN HIS FACE...'



'WARREN, TERESA'S FIFTH, WAS KILLED WHEN THEIR CAR WAS STRUCK BY A TRAIN! TERESA WAS THROWN CLEAR AND SUFFERED ONLY MILD BRUISES...'



THEN PETER, HUSBAND NUMBER SIX, WAS ELECTROCUTED WHILE TAKING A BATH! A RADIO HE WAS LISTENING TO FELL INTO THE TUB OF WATER.



SEE WHAT I MEAN? SEE HOW THEY ALL BELIEVE THE DEATHS WERE ACCIDENTS? ACCIDENTS, MY BLOODSHOT EYE! THEY WERE EACH COLD, CALCULATED MURDER! TAKE FROM EARL'S DEATH, FOR INSTANCE.



AND BOBGLAS, HUSBAND NUMBER THREE, MET HIS UNTIMELY FATE BECAUSE AFTER CLEANING HIS GUN, HE LEFT IT AROUND WHERE TERESA COULD GET AT IT! SHE FOURED MORTEN LEAD INTO THE BARREL, BLOTTING IT UP.



AND, OF COURSE YOU KNOW HOW POOR FREDDY WAS KILLED!

YES! WELL! TERESA'S LEAVING! I GUESS IT'S ALL OVER! COMING?



OH, SURE EARL FELL ASLEEP WHILE FISHING! BUT HE FISHED ABOUT THE RAPIDS AND THE FALLS DOWNSTREAM, SO HE WAS VERY CAREFUL TO TIE UP THE BOAT TO AN OVERHANGING BOUGH BEFORE TAKING HIS SHOOTIE! ONLY



AND AS FOR HOWARD, WELL, HE WAS INSIDE THE TRAILER WHEN TERESA STOPPED IT AT THE CLIFF EDGE! WHEN SHE SCREAMED, HOWARD CAME OUT OF THE TRAILER DOOR FULL-SPEED.



NEAL, HUSBAND FOUR, WAS LEANING OUT OF HIS OFFICE WINDOW, LOOKING FOR THE NEW CADILLAC TERESA CLAIMED WAS PARKED BELOW, WHEN TERESA YANKED THE SCATTER HUG OUT FROM BENEATH HIS FEET!





AS FOR WARREN, HUSBAND FIVE? HE'D MADE THE MISTAKE OF FALLING ASLEEP WHILE TERESA WAS DRIVING HOME FROM A PARTY! SHE'D JUST STOPPED THEIR CAR ON THE GRADE-CROSSING, STEPPED OUT, AND WAITED.



AND PETER, WHO LOVED MUSIC, ERRED WHEN HE TOOK HIS BATH WITH HIS BACK TO THE DOOR! HE NEVER SAW TERESA OPEX IT, REACH THE STICK IN, AND KNOCK THE RADIO OFF THE SHELF ABOVE THE TUB.



YES, THEY'D ALL BEEN MURDERED! BUT THEY NEVER *KNEW* IT! ONLY *FREDDY*. TERESA'S *SEVENTH* HUSBAND. *HE KNEW*! FREDDY WAS A *FLYING* GUY. OWNED HIS OWN PLANE! HE'D HAD A RUNWAY LEVELLED AT ONE END OF TERESA'S VAST ESTATE! EVERY DAY HE'D TAKE OFF... FLY AROUND... AND LAND.



ONE DAY, WHILE HE WAS *OFF*, TERESA STRUNG A STROGO WIRE, TAUGHT ABOUT TWO FEET HIGH, ACROSS THE RUNWAY.



AND WHEN FREDDY CAME IN FOR A LANDING...



BUT FREDDY WASN'T KILLED IN THE CRASH! WHEN HE CRAWLED FROM THE WRECKAGE, TERESA WAS FORCED TO FINISH THE JOB.



SO YOU SEE WHO I'VE CHRISTENED TERESA 'MADAM BLUEBEARD'? WHAT'S THAT YOU SAY? SHE MUST BE NUTS! OF COURSE SHE'S NUTS! IT STEMS BACK TO HER CHILDHOOD... WHEN HER FATHER WALKED OUT ON TERESA AND HER MOTHER...



TERESA'S MOTHER HAD BEEN EMBITTERED BY HER HUSBAND'S LEAVING! SHE'D PASSED UP HER DAUGHTER TO ANGE MEN...

MEN ARE BEASTS, TERESA! THEY'RE NOTHING BUT ANIMALS! YES, MOTHER!



ALL OF HER LIFE SHE'D BEEN TAUGHT

MONEY? THAT'S ALL THEY'RE GOOD FOR! THE BEASTS!

YES, MOTHER!



UNTIL IT BECAME LOGICAL IN TERESA'S WARPED MIND THAT...

MEN ARE BEASTS! WILD BEASTS! WILD BEASTS MUST BE DESTROYED!



AND SO, ON THE FIRST ANNIVERSARY OF HER MOTHER'S DEATH, EARL, TERESA'S FIRST HUSBAND, LAY IN HIS GRAVE? TERESA CAME AND LAID A WREATH ON IT IN HER MOTHER'S HONOR...



THEN, WHEN TERESA'S MOTHER DIED ON A COLD DAY IN NOVEMBER...

I'LL AVENGE YOUR DEATH, MOTHER! YOU SHALL SEE! THEY'LL PAY FOR THIS! THE BEASTS!



AND ON THE SECOND ANNIVERSARY OF HER MOTHER'S PASSING, THERE WERE TWO GRAVES TO PLACE WREATHS UPON! EARL'S... AND HOWARD, HER SECOND HUSBAND'S



YEAR AFTER YEAR, THE NEAT LITTLE ROW OF GRAVES GROW!  
AND YEAR AFTER YEAR, TERESA CAME AND PLACED WREATHS  
UPON THEM, IN HONOR OF HER *MOTHER*...



SIX YEARS, MOTHER!  
AND SIX WREATHS.  
IN YOUR MEMORY!

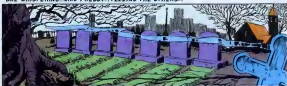
NOW THE BLACK-CLAD MOURNERS  
ARE FILING OUT OF THE CEMETERY.  
LEAVING THE SEVENTH GRAVE TO  
BE FILLED IN... *FREDDY'S GRAVE!*



LET'S GET TO  
WORK, HARK!

YEAH! IT'S  
GETTING COLD!

AND SO THE SEVENTH GRAVE IS FILLED IN! THE NEAT LINE LIES SILENT UNDER THE GARKENING  
SKY! EARL, UNDER THE FIRST! HOWARD, BENEATH THE SECOND! DOUGLAS UNDER THE THIRD  
MOUND! NEAL, BELOW THE FOURTH! WARNER IN THE FIFTH! AND PETER, THE SIXTH! EACH PEACE-  
FUL IN DEATH, EACH *MEMORANT!* AND IN THE FRESH GRAVE, *FREDDY WHO KNOWS!* AND AS  
THE WIND COMES UP, RUSTLING THROUGH THE BARE TREES, SWEEPING ACROSS THE GRAVE STONES,  
WHISTLING PAST THE ROW OF SEVEN GRAVES, IT SEEMS TO SOUND LIKE A *WHISPER*... LIKE *SOME-  
ONE WHISPERING*... LIKE *FREDDY, TELLING THE OTHERS*...



ONE DAY, IN NOVEMBER...



I'D LIKE TO BUY  
SOME WREATHS!  
SEVEN OF THEM!

YES, MA'AM! SHALL I  
WRAP THEM OR ARE  
YOU GOING ACROSS THE  
ROAD WITH THEM?



I'M GOING ACROSS THE  
ROAD TO THE CEMETERY!  
HOW MUCH WILL THAT  
BE?

ER... FOURTEEN  
DOLLARS, MA'AM!  
THESE ARE HARD  
TO GET THIS TIME  
OF YEAR!

TERESA CROSSES THE ROAD AND ENTERS THE CEMETERY, THE SEVEN WREATHS IN HER ARMS.



FOURTEEN DOLLARS? THE BEAST.

ON OVER THE FROZEN MOUND SHE MOVES TO THE NEAT ROW OF SEVEN GRAVES...



SHE STOOPS AND PLACES A WREATH UPON EACH GRAVE.



THEN TERESA FORGES HER FACE TOWARD THE GARDENING BOY AND BEGINS TO LAUGH! BUT HER LAUGH IS CUT SHORT BY A HUMBLE BENEATH HER FEET! SHE STARES DOWN, HORRIFIED! THE SEVEN GRAVES ARE EACH CRACKING OPEN...



GOOD LORD!

THE HOTTED HAND REACHES UP FROM BENEATH THE FROZEN EARTH, GRASPING TERESA'S ANKLE IN A DEATH-LIKE GRIP! SHE CANNOT RUN! SHE CANNOT MOVE! SHE CAN ONLY WATCH, AS THE CORPSES RISE FROM THEIR GRAVES! WATCH AND SCREAM.



AND AS TERESA'S SCREAMS END IN A CHOKING COUGH, SILENCE ONCE AGAIN DESCENDS UPON THE GRAVE YARD! THE WIND WHISPERS ACROSS THE CEMETERY, CARRESSING THE NEAT LITTLE ROW OF GRAVES! ONLY NOW, THERE ARE *EIGHT* GRAVES INSTEAD OF SEVEN! AND ON THE EIGHTH GRAVE... LIE SEVEN SOLED WREATHS.



HEH, HEH! SO HAPPY ANNIVERSARY, MOTHER! THAT'S A LOVELY GIFT! THOSE *MEN-BEASTS* SAVE YOU! I HOPE YOU'RE *GRATEFUL*! OH, BY THE WAY, FIDELIS! YOU'LL BE GRATEFUL WHEN YOU RECEIVE AN ORDER OF BACK ISSUES! GET ALL OF MINE OR CRYPT OR HAUNT, OR JUST GET THEM ALL! DON'T FORGET! THE OTHER EC TITLES! TO FIND OUT MORE, READ *THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S GORMER* IN THIS ISSUE! THE OLD BUZZARD GIVES *FULL PARTICULARS*! 'SEE, NOW! REMEMBER! 'CREMATED CORPSES NEVER DIE! THEY JUST BLAZE AWAY!



THE END



# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

I am writing to tell you how great your comics are. Everyone before I got to sleep I have to read one or two stories. I love your comics. You can print my address.

Orlando Garcia

1729 W Superior  
Chicago, IL 60622

I want to know if you guys are going to have a fun club. I have a favorite episode from "Crypt" series, called "The House of Horrors" (and another one called "What's Cooking?"), and I want to know what issue are you going to put it in so I can purchase it. Are there going to be any special editions like Halloween annals and all that?

Phillips Sandoz

© Paso, TX

"House of Horror" (singular) ran in CRYPT 8, get our back issue. But it ran originally in HAUNT 1; get our back issue! The house is also they ran it twice! Inquire after our "Annals," they collect each title under one cover about five issues a week. —CK

A couple days ago I was looking at baseball cards and I found a card with the signature at the bottom saying "Jack Davis." Did he draw the card?

Paul O'Leary (Needham, MA)

Surely did. The card is © 1983 Sunbelt Brown. Davis does lots of advertising work. And with my son, the #11111! —CK



Is it true that your nickname is "Crypty"? I got it out of the book called "Jokes from the Crypt." I would just die and draw out my grave to get CRYPT!

Can you send me the recipe for ghoulash?

Bryan Korla

North Beach, MA

Call me later. (One part ghoul, one part hash.) —CK

I like your comics and I collect your trading cards. I watch your show every Saturday. I also watch your cartoon. I like your story "Loved to Death" and "Death of Some Salesman." I like the TV version of "People who Live in Brass Houses" and "Television Terror."

Tucker Gagliardi

Oakland, CA

So how's it going in the Critical Crypt? Not much here. The in school right now and we're watching a movie about movie. I don't think anyone's really watching. I think you guys are the best thing that has ever come out of hell. I have a idea for a story. It would rule if you did a "Phantom of the Opera" story.

William Wallace

FT Wayne, IN

I will read the boards in "Top Billing," VAULT 28. And quit reading comics in class even when! —CK

You are the coolest dead person alive. I am starting my subscription to your comic. I think The Old Witch is a first brooder. The Vault-Keeper is just a pain in the ass, sometimes. But I liked his story in CRYPT and I liked your story "Drown and Quarrel." Do you like girls? (Not The Old Witch. She's not a girl.) Could you please send me CRYPT no. 2 or 3? Please. I'm begging you! Please! Send Friends For Life (Or death).

Dee Gale

Capitol, MI

You're right, The Old Witch hates hysterics. You can get any of my back issues, or any EC title. See the end of this column. —CK

I love your comics. I love them so much I could die. I am drawing up on the Crypt-Keeper and I don't know what to wear. What should I wear?

Dave Hanes

Portney, TX

When I shed my blue robes, I'm partial to a white sport coat and a pink carnation. —CK

I want you to like last issue but I didn't get it printed. I really liked Crypt 10 my favorite story was "Drown and Quarrel." If you print my letter, could you please send me an autographed picture of yourself? Your #1 fan & friend,

Ashley Robinson, 12

Lockhart, SC

Berry, get me water'd photos. See below. —CK

"Drown and Quarrel?" In issue #10 is the best story I've read yet! It BUREAU all the others from "Drown and The Witch" (Is that underground? that is!) Your best fan,

Frank Felder

Arrow, OK

I love CRYPT comics, the stories are good and scary. One of the stories I liked was "Drown and Quarrel." The comics have neat pictures, too! Why are the comics called EC comics?

Chris Feltner

Memphis, NJ

Somebody everyone liked "Drown" "EC" stands for "Entertaining Comics." Get out your microscope and you can read it on the cover "panels." —CK

Thanks for printing my letter in CRYPT #10, but these last two lines WEREN'T mine. You must have mixed-up my letter and someone else's. I don't even write "Tales From The Crypt-Keeper" (too juvenile). The guy who really wrote those lines is probably screaming "cause you didn't give him the credit.

I'm sure the Crypt-Keeper can come up with a suitable punishment for your Weirly youse.

Barry McGillicut

Alton, IL

You're right; that final paragraph was from the letter of Myron James, Rockville, IN. —CK

Do you know every scary story there is to know? I think you do! I want to get the talking Crypt-Keeper doll. I love scary things! Like you!

Justin Winkelman

Souls City, IA

**Like-or-as?**

—CK

I really enjoy reading your scary books, but you should make The Crypt-Keeper tell more stories because all the other people have their own books.

Uma Michael

Glastonbury, CT

**Make-or left?**

—CK

Hi I'm Tony Martinez, a big fan. But you can call me "Steak"! Tony, I am a faithful reader of CRYPT, VAULT and HALINT. I can read them over and over, and never tire.

By the way, I would love to receive letters from other EC fans from around the world, so please print my address. Any fan can write to me in Spanish, English, Italian, or French. I'll enjoy it a lot, since I like foreign languages.

Thanks for listening, OK, off buddy. I have to go brush my tangs, drink a glass of blood, and hop into the coffin. So, sweet nightmares!

Tony Martinez, age 17

6041 S Calhoun AV  
Chicago, IL 60629

Recently I got the [hardback] Complete CRYPT and in several issues it stated that there were photos of the three Ghoul-Ladies. I was writing to see if those photos are still available, and if so, how much do they cost? Your fan,

Adam Owens

address unknown

I have a few questions for you... could you get The Y.K. out at my mag? Could Mr. Cochran reprint the 1950s photos of the Ghoul-Ladies? Will the Pre-Trend and New Direction comics, as well as PARO and MAD, be reprinted in regular format? I would like to have a pen-pal so please print my full address. Your pal,

John Brown

POB 1201  
Hartman, TN 37746

**That's what it would take to offer photos** [the Adam Owens and Ashley Robinson, see above] talk about—reprinting the 1950s photos. Maybe we will. Some other EC comic titles are scheduled for this series, no maybe to it! —CK

I'm collecting your comics. I've also getting VAULT and HALINT. I couldn't choose just one, they're all great. Do you like being the Crypt-Keeper? Your scary fan,

Cassie Meeks

Peetles, OH

**Best unemployment?**

—CK

I just wanted to tell you dudes that the stupid "being story in issue 7 by The Vault-Keeper, "Wooden Death!", was dumb. But don't worry, because I think he made up for it in issue 8 [with] "Lady, You're Not Yourself Today!", that story was cool! Please print my address.

Joshua Keane, 12

31 Budd ST  
Mount Holly, NJ 08060

**Best VR can hope for: To break even?**

—CK

I love your mag! I have seen all of your shows. I am going to get all of the EC CLASSICS. I love CRYPT 6. I like the tale "Scared To Death!"

I looked in my video store. I cannot find the "Tales from the Crypt" movie. Maybe you could tell me where I can get a copy of it. And do you make more than 6 RCP 64-page EOs?

Patrick Burke!!

Tampa, FL

There were 7 issues of RCP CRYPT, and 8 each of RCP VAULT and HALINT. All still available. Write for list and please! Buy, read! Mark, here! —CK

I just got my copy of CRYPT 6, and I see you printed my letter. And you've done a little editing. And I think you made a mistake! You left [redacted] last name printed. Did you do that on purpose or accident?

And I think [redacted] has a point! Please print my [new] address.

Jason Parker

6763 Davis RD  
Riverside, SC 29470

I did it [redacted]. On purpose.

—CK

I am your funny fan that lives in the gutter. I like your comics but they are hard to come by. I'm 11 years old. How old are you? I watch you on tv also. I like you better than the Vault-Keeper and the Old Witch. Could you tell me where I can get a lot of your comics because the stores are always out of comics? What is your phone number? Your fan,

Bobby Harris, II

Baton Rouge, LA

**Funny you should ask. You can get our comics from us direct, and our phone number is 1-800-EC-CRYPT.**

—CK

I am a 14 year old girl and I want to know why there isn't more gore in your comics. I think it's because of the children who can't sleep with the sight of blood, of course you don't want to give the poor babies nightmares.

I guess what I'm trying to say is it's ok to put more violence in your comics. If those pansy parents and children can't stand it, let them cry about it. Your readers and real fans are here to support you. Like the saying goes if you can't take the heat stay out of the incinerator.

Santolina Arnold

Atlanta, GA

Why is it that in most of your tales you never show the faces of the hell-exterminators? I would also like to know if you could make the stories more scary. When I say more scary I mean make them similar to the TV series on HBO. I love your comics and I won't stop reading them.

Lalania Reed

Monte WY, GA

**TV goes for your viscera. We go for your mind. Besides, we eat the faces first.**

—CK

I've been doing some research and I found that the first issue of CRYPT was named INTERNATIONAL COMICS and issue #9 when it was renamed INTERNATIONAL CRIME PATROL. At #7 it was shortened to CRIME PATROL up to issue #18. Then at #17 (which is your first issue of CRYPT in this run of reprints) it was CRYPT OF TERROR for 5 issues. At the sacred issue of 20 it became TALES FROM THE CRYPT! My question is will you ever be reprinting these first 18 issues? Interestingly Yours,

Nathaniel Wilson

Pittsburgh, PA

The first, say, 8 nights of this design would remind you of period (RCP) EC comics, I think. Not until the advent of Grig & Feltstein would you commence to see any EC-mess, not until the last few issues would you see ME! You can see the CRIME PATROL issues in the WAR AGAINST CRIME/CRIME PATROL set of The Complete EC Library. —CK

I love your stories. I'm 13 years old, but I'm going crazy over CRYPT. I loved your story "Death Must Come." You ought to make more stories about eternal life.

Two stories from your TV show got me in a CRYPT mood. The first is "Korman's Identity." I looked at the office in the program. Is that what your office looks like? The second was "Yellow," starring Kirk Douglas and Sam

Alyrold I got a question. Why can't I find it?

If anyone would like to talk about OK, the comics or "Tales from the Crypt" stories, write me.

Andy Tristenbach 3277 Parkton Way  
Baltimore, MD 21212

We released the "Kamen's" on cable, "Kamen's Kamenity!" from CRYPT 18 will come around soon (or get 64-pg RCP CRYPT #1 right now!) and the 6 pretty concrete, "Teller" ran in SPOCK #1 (back issues available). —CK

First of all let me say: I am a HUGE fan of CRYPT, VAULT and HAUNT, but your stories are definitely the best. Although I am only 13 years old, I love your comics and I have been reading them for about 2 years.

I don't know why the printers put The Old Witch's and The Youth-Keeper's stories in with yours, they don't compare.

You're very handsome. do you get your good looks from your Mommy or from your Daddy?

Jared Bringer Hot Springs, AR

Buy 64-pg GLAD CRYPT #1 and find out! Hah-hah! —CK

I love your comics. In my opinion, they are the best comics on the market. But at great as your comics as you can make them much better by adding a little more blood and gore to the pictures. The stories are fine (just make the pictures a little more gruesome. If you add just a little more gore the comics may become the best on the market) (not just in my opinion). Trust me, I'm your most dedicated fan (I'm not going to say I'm your #1 fan because that's what all you fans say). The reason why I say I'm your most dedicated fan is because one wall of my room is dedicated to EC comics and the rest of my room looks like a smaller version of the house on the HMO series.

David Rinal Brooklyn, NY

Clean your room! —CK

I love your comics. I really think that OK and VK should get run over by a truck. VK stinks at telling stories. His story in CRYPT 80 really sucked.

"Midnight Snack" was predictable and not scary at all.

I started collecting EC comics about a year ago. My Dad and I were in Cleveland for a ball game when we walked into a B. Dalton Bookseller and I started to look for a BATMAN comic when I spotted a CRYPT #1 in the bottom. As far as I'm concerned all EDCs should be at the top. I bought it, and have been subscribing ever since. Your takes are the most gruesome, and have the best endings.

Here is CRYPT #15 in order: COVER. Really blood did a pretty good job. Is it just me, or does OW look drunk on the cover?

"Green and Quarantined" Best story in the book. Jack Davis #1 is the best. Man, I sure wouldn't like to be run over by a subway.

"The Borrowed Body" Worst story in the book. VK really can't tell stories. I'm telling you.

"Indian Burial Mound" No offense, Crypty, but I wasn't that good. You've had better stories in your lifetime. I mean, you could tell that Roy was gonna die.

"Political Pull" Okay but the end was unrealistic. A body wouldn't even last a month let alone a year in the sea.

Please print my address. If anybody disagrees with my opinions and criticism, please write. Oh and OK, don't die yet, cause I love your work! Gruesomely yours,

Talia Berszonow, 11 years old 305 Woodbridge LN  
Orionville, MI 48862

I love your comic books. I have 4 questions for the Crypt-Keeper: When is your Birthday? Do you have any brothers or sisters? Are you married? or do you have to dig up a date? Will you be my pet cat?

Scott Ramsey Vancouver, BC

See below for Birthday information (Get a shovel!) —CK

I found out one of the great mysteries of all time. How old you are. You are 121 years old in 1994! I have proof to back me up. In GLAD CRYPT #1 during the introduction of the story "Lower Birth", you explain that a circus came to a small town 60 years ago. A year later you were born, this was said in 1993. So in 1992 you were 70 years old. 43 years later (1994) you are 121 years old (70+42=121).

Being an artist myself, I think that your artist, Jack Davis, and the Old Hag's, cops, I mean Old Witch's artist, Graham Ingels, are the most talented artists of the EC horror comic. Jack's corpse drawings and Graham's finely rendered pictures are superb.

My top favorite three takes, in order, are: 1st - "The Chips Are Down" (RCP VAULT #1) 2nd - "Pool Play" (RCP VAULT #6) and 3rd - "While The Cat's Away" (GLAD VAULT #1). The best episodes from "Tales From The Crypt" the series are "18 Death" and "Mountain Mead".

Now come the dreaded questions. On the back of my Crypt card #60 it says the (cover of) CRYPT #68 was to be the cover for a new EC horror comic. What was the comic's title to be, and who was to be the host?

Do you have any posters or T-shirts to sell? Please print my address.

Jeffrey Jones 4231 Sansam Blvd  
Bensalem, PA 19050

An interesting theory, that much on my age. How long after my telling that tale did EC write it up for the comics? I said "about" 60 years. And, were these human years or dog years?

EC planned a fourth horror title in late 1984, and was going to call it THE CRYPT OF TERROR (which revived the original title of this mag, dropped after the "first" three issues). I would have been the host (who died?) and the first issue was prepared and did see print as issue "448" of CRYPT (actually 430).

Funny you should ask (hah-hah); the back cover of this comic offers a T-shirt ONLY YOU COMICS FANS will get! —CK

Also available this month are WEIRD SCIENCE and SPOCK, stories for VAULT, WEIRD PARADE and TWO-PICTED and HAUNT, Don's Fright House, INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION and GHOST. See them at your local comic book shop or WorldWide Web our ad in this issue for details.

Single Issues: CRYPT #1, 64 page (subject to availability) \$5.00 each (US) Issues 25, 31 \$5.00 each. Issues 24 and 30, \$3 each. Add \$5 per order (US \$ outside US) for \$50.

Write to:  
CRYPT  
RUE COLEMAN  
POB 488  
WEST PLAIN, MO 65755

#### THIS COMIC REPRINTS

TALES FROM THE CRYPT #67" (J11, CBC \$1/JAN 92)

COVER by Wally Wood

"West-Coast Horror"

"Madame Bluebeard"

"Return"

"Horror Head...J Off"

Jack Davis

Joe Orlando

Jack Kamen

Graham Ingels

We welcome letters of comment. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters we feel are overly abusive and angry. We sometimes remove short letters and do not print, so really we are your main opinion. The intent is to encourage discussion of letters, so do not treat your address as confidential either.



HERE'S A GHOSTLY YARD!

I CALL IT...

**RETURN!**



MYRA SAT ON THE CHAIR BY THE WINDOW, STAREING OUT AT THE GENTLY FALLING RAIN! A SINGLE TEAR SLID SILENTLY DOWN ONE CHEEK.

OH, JIM! JIM! WHY DID YOU GO AWAY AGAIN? WHY DON'T YOU COME BACK. NOW THAT I NEED YOU SO?



MYRA SMILED! SUDDENLY THE TELEPHONE RANG! SHE RUSHED TO IT, HOPEING. PRAYING ...

HELLO? WHHRR! IT'S MAM... MAM FORREST! I JUST GOT IN! WILL YOU BE HOME FOR THE REST OF THE NIGHT?





HAL, BEAR! IT'S SO, MYNA! GOING TO ~~WASH~~ YOUR VOICE? IS ~~JIM~~ WITH YOU?



MYNA HOOKED EARLY AND HUNG UP! HAL - HAL FORREST, JIM'S PARTNER, WAS HOME. WITHOUT JIM! MYNA PLUNGED HERSELF ON THE SOFA AND BEGAN TO SOB.



OH, JIM! ~~JIM~~! WHERE ARE YOU? WHERE ARE YOU, DARLING?

HAL FORREST HAD BEEN BEST MAN AT JIM AND MYNA'S WEDDING! THAT HAD BEEN OVER SIXTEEN MONTHS AGO! THE THREE OF THEM HAD DRIVEN UPSTATE TO A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.



TEN MORE MILES, KIDS! THEN, DOGS! EXCUSE ME!

THE J.P.'S HOME HAD BEEN A LOVELY LITTLE PLACE. THE KIND OF HOUSE MYNA'D READ ABOUT IN BOOKS! IT WAS WHITE SHINGLES, COVERED WITH CLIMBING ROSES AND VINE.



AND I NOW PRODUCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!

JIM! MYNA!

OH-OH! YOU TAKE THE CAR! DRIVE UP SOME-PLACE AND ENJOY YOURSELVES! SOON!

SO LONG, HAL! THANKS A LOT, KID!

YOU'RE A DREAM, HAL!



HAL HAD PLANTED THE BEST MAN'S TRADITIONAL KISS ON MYNA'S CHEEK, AND THEN ANNOUNCED.

WELL, KIDS! HAVE A NICE TIME ON YOUR HONEYMOON! I'VE GOT A TRAIN TO CATCH!

TRAMP! YOU! BUT YOUR CAR!



LATER, AS JIM AND MYNA SPED ALONE.

THAT WAS ~~FREE~~! OF HAL TO LEND US THE CAR, WASN'T IT, JIM?

YEAH! HE'S A ~~HELL~~! GUY! WE ~~FLIP~~ TOGETHER DURING THE WAR! WE'RE GOING INTO ~~BUSINESS~~ TOGETHER WHEN YOU AND I GET BACK!





WHAT KIND OF BUSINESS?

AN AIR-FREIGHT 'NAL'S GOT A LINE ON A DC-3! IF WE CAN SWING IT...



YOU MEAN FLYING?

WHY NOT? THAT'S ALL I KNOW! BESIDES - THERE'S GOOD MONEY IN IT IF YOU OWN YOUR OWN SHIP!



BUT, THAT MEANS WE'LL BE SEPARATED!

ONLY FOR A FEW DAYS AT A TIME, MYRA! WE'RE JUST GOING TO FLY SHORT-HOP STUFF!

AND SO MYRA'S HONEYMOON HAD BEGUN! THEY'D FOUND A QUIET LITTLE HOTEL AND SPENT TWO WEEKS OF HEAVEN. THEY'D SOME RIDING, FISHING, SWIMMING.



C'NONE IS, HONEY! THE WATER'S FINE!

BE WITH YOU IN A MINUTE! I'VE GOT TO PUT ON MY CAP.

BUT EVERYTHING WONDERFUL FINALLY HAD TO END AND MYRA AND JIM'S HONEYMOON WAS NO EXCEPTION THEN...



WE GOT THE FLARE, MYRA! A DC-3! IT'S A BEAUTY! AN AIR-SUPPLIES JOB! BALD STRIPPING DOWN THE ENGINE'S NOW! I'VE GOT TO GET RIGHT BACK TO THE AIRPORT...

OH, I SEE! THEN YOUR WORKING TO RIGHT?

AFTER THE FLARE WAS RECONDITIONED, JIM HAD BEGUN SOLICITING BUSINESS...



ANY LEAD, JIM?

NOT ONE LEAD! BLAST IT! THE BIG LINES HAVE THE AIR-FREIGHT SERVICE ALL SERVED UP!

AND THEN, ONE NIGHT, JIM HAD RUSHED HOME...



MYRA! LOOK! A CONTRACT! WE'RE RICH!

OH, JIM! I'M SO HAPPY!





AND SO, THEY'D BEEN TOGETHER AGAIN... IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS! BUT MYRA'S JOY WAS SHORT-LIVED... FOR THE NEXT MORNING...





# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

NOW THAT YOU'VE HAD YOUR *CHILLING APPETIZERS* FROM MY FELLOW GHOULMATES, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO SERVE YOU THE *MAIN COURSE*! SO COME INTO THE *HAUNT OF FEAR*! MY CAULDRON BUBBLES AND GURGLES! IT'S EVIL, SPIN IS JUST ABOUT READY! YEP! IT'S *ME AGAIN*! THE *OLD WITCH*! HELLO! *HUNGRY*? GOOD! THEN OPEN YOUR LITTLE LEERING MOUTHS AND I'LL STUFF IN THE *TASTY TERROR-TALE* I CALL...

**HORROR!**

**HEAD...**

**IT OFF!**

THE YEAR WAS 1793! THE PLACE WAS FRANCE DURING THE BLOODY DAYS KNOWN AS 'THE REIGN OF TERROR'. FOLLOWING THE FRENCH REVOLUTION! IN PALE SILHOUETTED AGAINST THE GRAY SKY STOOD THE NOTORIOUS *GUILLOTINE* FOR ITS GLAMING BLADE WAS HOISTED, THE GATHERED CROWD BROUDED AND CAT-CALLED! FROM SOMEWHERE CAME THE OMINOUS ROLL OF A SHARP DRUM! THE BLADE FLASHED DOWNWARD... AND ANOTHER MEMBER OF THE DOOMED ARISTOCRACY MET HIS END AS HIS HEAD UNFROD INTO THE WAITING BASKET.

DAVID L. V.

FAR ACROSS PARIS...NEAR FROM THIS BLOODY SCENE...TWO FIGURES MADE THEIR WAY SLOWLY THROUGH A CROOKED STREET. ONE MAN WAS TALL, WELL-BUILT, BUT CRIPPLED. THE OTHER WAS SHORT AND SQUAT. THE CRIPPLED ONE MOVED PAINFULLY, FIRST STEPPING, THEN DRAGGING HIS HELPLESS CLUB FOOT.

DOOR THE STRANGERS TWO-ONE CAME TO A DARK ALLEY. THEY TURNED IN, STOPPING BEFORE A BATTERED DOOR. THE SMALL ONE THROCKED ANXIOUSLY. FINALLY, IT CREAKED OPEN.

YES? WHAT IS IT? WE WE HAVE COME TO BUY SOME FLOWERS!



WORTH MASTER! WE ARE ALMOST THERE! I AM GASP COMING, LOUIS! I CAN'T WALK AS FAST AS YOU!

THE GREY MAN BEHIND THE DOOR PEERED OUT AT THEM...

FLOWERS? WE WANT SOME WHAT KIND FLEURS-DE-LIS OF FLOWERS?



COME IN! I'LL SEE WHAT I CAN DO! YOU ARE MOST KIND!



THE FAT MAN CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND THE TWO VISITORS AND TURNED TO THEM.

AND... IT DOES NOT MATTER WHO THIS IS THE MARQUIS DE ARCHEMONT? I AM HIS SERVANT, HERE? LOUIS?



YOU HAVE... MONEY? YES! WE HAVE THE AMOUNT! YOU WILL HELP HIM TO FLEE PARIS AS THEY SAID YOU WOULD?



CERTAINLY! I WILL MAKE ALL THE NECESSARY ARRANGEMENTS! BUT FIRST... IF YOU DON'T MIND... THE MONEY! OF COURSE! HERE YOU ARE!





THE FAT ONE COUNTED THE  
GOLD AND THEN SMILED.

AND  
YOU  
AME?

I AM  
HENRI  
LUGENE,  
AT YOUR  
SERVICE!

LUGENE!  
YOU ARE THE  
DUKE DE  
LUGENE?



THAT IS *CORRECT!*  
I HAVE DEDICATED  
MYSELF TO HELPING  
*FELLOW MEMBERS*  
OF MY CLASS  
*ESCAPE THE*  
*BULLDOGINES!*

AM' M'SIEU  
LE DUC?  
THIS IS A  
*NOBLE*  
*THING*  
YOU DO!  
IT WERE  
NOT FOR  
MY CLUM-  
FOOT.



YOU WILL BE  
READY TO  
LEAVE AT MID-  
NIGHT? A COACH  
WILL BE AT THE  
ALLEYWAY!

I WILL BE  
READY!  
I DO NOW,  
MASTER.  
BEFORE I  
AM MISSED!  
GOOD LUCK!

AFTER LOUIS, THE MARQUIS DE HODENHONT'S  
SERVANT, LEFT.



HE IS NOT  
GONE WITH  
YOU?

THERE IS NO NEED! HE WAS  
ONLY MY SERVANT! THE  
BULLDOGINES DOES NOT THINK  
FOR HIS HEAD! ONLY  
*WIRE*...



THAT NIGHT, A COACH DREW UP TO THE ALLEY-  
WAY! THE *CLUMP ORAG CLUMP ORAG*  
FOOTSTEPS OF THE FUGITIVE MARQUIS APPROACHED!

SEN VOYAGE, MARQUIS  
AND GOOD LUCK!

GOOD-BYE, M'SIEU LE  
DUC! THANK YOU! MAY  
YOU CONTINUE TO HELP  
OTHER UNFORTUNATES  
LIKE ME!

AS THE COACH CLATTERED OFF INTO THE DARK-  
NESS, HENRI... THE FAT GUY DE LUGENE  
SMILED TO HIMSELF...



DO NOT WORRY, M'SIEU LE MARQUIS! I  
WILL CONTINUE! IT PAYS ME WELL  
AND MY HEAD REMAINS ON MY  
SHOULDERS!

SOON AFTER, NEAR THE GATES OF PARIS



WHAT IS THE  
MEANING  
OF THIS?

IT MEANS, M'SIEU LE MAR-  
QUIS, THAT YOU ARE UNDER  
ARREST IN THE NAME OF  
THE FRENCH REPUBLIC!  
TOMORROW, THE GUILLO-  
TINE AWAITS.



SOON, BACK AT THE HOUSE OF HENRI, DUKE DE LUIGNE.



WELL, CAPTAIN? THAT IS OUR ARRANGEMENT? I TURN THEM OVER TO YOU - AND SAVE MY NECK, EN?

SAVE YOUR NECK IS RIGHT, LUGNER! IF IT WERE NOT FOR THIS LITTLE SERVICE YOU PERFORM, YOUR HEAD WOULD HAVE ROLLED LONG AGO!



AND SO THE NEXT DAY BEFORE THE JEERING MOB, THE MARQUIS DE ROCHEMONT LIMPED UP THE STEPS OF THE GUILLOTINE.



AND AS THE GLIMMING BLADE WAS HOISTED SKWARD, THE DRUM BEGAN ITS OMINOUS ROLL.



THE CROWD ROARED AS THE BLADE PLUNGETTED DOWNWARD! BUT IN ITS RISE, ONE MAN DID NOT CHEER! HIS FACE WAS GRIM! IT WAS SHORT, BOUT LOUIS, THE MARQUIS' SERVANT.



LATER... CAPTAIN! THERE IS A MAN OUTSIDE! HE HAS COME TO CLAIM THE MARQUIS DE ROCHEMONT'S REMAINS. HE WAS HIS SERVANT!



LET THE BOSSMAN TAKE IT! TONIGHT!



AND SO, LATE THAT NIGHT A CART RUMBLLED THROUGH THE DESERTED STREETS OF PARIS CARRYING A MACABRE CARGO... A COFFIN, CONTAINING THE DECAPITATED REMAINS OF THE MARQUIS DE ROCHEMONT! IT WAS DRIVEN BY LOUIS, HIS EVER-FAITHFUL SERVANT.

I WILL SEE THAT YOU HAVE A DECENT BURIAL, MASTER!



THE NEXT DAY, LOUIS STOPPED  
HENRI WHERE ON THE STREET.

AM, LOUIS? I AM  
SORRY! I HEARD  
THE BAD NEWS!

YES, M'SIEU LE  
DOCT' MY MAS-  
TER... WAS BE-  
HEADED YESTER-  
DAY!

SH-H-H! YOU  
FOOL! DO NOT  
CALL ME LE  
DOCT'!

WHY NOT? EVERY-  
ONE KNOWS  
ABOUT YOU! I  
HAVE LEARNED  
THE TRUTH...  
MYSELF!

I, I MUST  
BE GOING!

WAIT! THERE IS  
SOMETHING I MUST  
SHOW YOU! COME!

LOUIS LED HENRI LUSURE TO THE MARKETPLACE...

HAVE YOU EVER BOUGHT A CHICKEN HERE,  
M'SIEU LUSURE? HAVE YOU EVER SEEN  
HOW THEY *KILL* THEM? LOOK!

USH!  
THEY CHOP  
OFF ITS  
HEAD!

YES, M'SIEU! NOW WATCH! SEE HOW  
THE BODY SQUIGGLES ABOUT WITHOUT  
ITS HEAD! SEE HOW IT FLAPS ITS  
WINGS!

HOW DIRTY!  
WHAT ARE YOU  
DRIVING AT?

SOMETIMES A CHICKEN WITH ITS HEAD  
CHOPPED OFF LIVES FOR MANY HOURS!  
I KNOW OF A GASE WHERE ONE LIVED  
FOR ALMOST A MONTH! IT ONLY DIED  
BECAUSE THE FARMER WHO OWNED IT  
ALLOWED THE *WINDPIPE* TO BLOW  
CLOSED!

WHY DO  
YOU TELL  
ME THESE  
THINGS?  
WHY?

IF A CHICKEN CAN LIVE ON  
WITH ITS HEAD REMOVED,  
M'SIEU LUSURE, THEN  
WHY NOT A HUMAN BEING?  
ERR

YOU'RE MAD! YOU'RE  
TRYING TO FRIGHTEN  
ME! BAH! FOOLISH-  
NESS!

LOUIS SCURRIED OFF, LAUGHING. WHILE HENRI WIPE THE PERSPIRATION FROM HIS FACE! LATER THAT NIGHT, AS HENRI LURED SAT IN HIS HOUSE...



THE IDIOT! IF HE THINKS HE CAN SCARE ME, HE'S...

SUDDENLY HENRI HEARD AN UNMISTAKABLE SOUND! FIRST, A CLUMP. THEN SOMETHING GRASSING... THEN A CLUMP... THEN THE GRASSING NOISE...



W. WHAT WAS THAT? IT SOUNDED LIKE FOOTSTEPS! LIKE A MAN... WITH A GLUB-FOOT!

THE CLUMPING, GRASSING SOUNDS CAME FROM THE ALLEY OUTSIDE! HENRI RUSHED TO THE DOOR... AND SLID THE BOLT CLOSED...



HE... HE'S AFTER ME! THE MARQUIS...

AS HENRI WATCHED NERVOUSLY, THE DOORKNOB TURNED SLOWLY! THEN IT RATTLED! SOMEONE OUTSIDE WAS TRYING TO GET IN...



OH, LORD... PROTECT ME! THANK GOD, I BOLTED IT IN TIME!

THEN THE CLUMP, GRAS... CLUMP, GRAS... FARED AWAY DOWN THE ALLEY...



HE... HE'S GOING AWAY! ME...

SUDDENLY, HENRI CURSED. WHAT A FOOL I AM! A STUPID FOOL! OF COURSE! THAT WAS LOUIS OUT THERE! HE'S TRYING TO FRIGHTEN ME! WHO EVER HEARD OF A BEHEADED MAN LIVING ON...



HENRI FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR AND PEERED OUT! THEN HE GASPED! THE TRACKS IN THE DIRT WERE UNMISTAKABLE! ONE SET WAS THAT OF A SMALL MAN! THE OTHERS WERE STRANGE... AS IF THE PERSON MAKING THEM GRASSED ONE FOOT...



A... A... GLUB-FOOT! NOW DIE! THEY WERE BOTH HERE!

HEMME SPUN AROUND! THE DOOR  
SLAMMED SHUT BEHIND HIM.

I... I'M LOCKED  
OUT!



THEN IT CAME AGAIN! THOSE  
SOUNDS! *CLUMP... DRAG...  
CLUMP... DRAG...* THEY MOVED  
TOWARD HEMME FROM THE DARK-  
NESS OF THE ALLEY...

WHO WHO'S THERE?  
LOUIS? IS THAT  
YOU?



A PAIR OF LEGS MOVED INTO THE  
SQUARE OF LIGHT THAT STREAMED  
FROM THE LAMP ABOVE THE DOOR.  
ONE OF THE LEGS HAD A CLUB  
FOOT! *STEP... DRAG... STEP...  
DRAG...*

DE MOCHMONT?  
NO! IT CAN'T  
BE!



THE LIGHT CREEPT UP THE HORRIBLE  
FIGURE... SLOWLY TO THE WAIST.

LOUIS? IT'S  
YOU... ISN'T IT?



TO THE GHOST...

YOU... YOU'RE  
TRYING TO...  
Frighten ME?  
AREN'T YOU?  
LOUIS? LOUIS?



AND THEN, THE WHOLE FIGURE  
MOVED INTO THE LIGHT! AND IT  
HAD NO HEAD...



LOUIS WAS HEARD ONE MORE TIME... RASHER IT...

JUST A LITTLE FURTHER...  
JUST A LITTLE!

NO! NO! KEEP AWAY!  
YAAAAAAAAAHHH!



WEE... WEE... YES-SURE! HEMME WAS JUST SURPRISED  
IN FACT HE LOST HIS HEAD! THEY FOUND HIM THE  
NEXT MORNING WITHOUT IT! HIS BODY WAS  
LAIN BESIDE THE MARCHION DE ROCH-  
MONT'S! THEY MADE QUITE A PAIR! IN FACT IF  
IT WEREN'T FOR THE MARCHION'S CLUB-FOOT, YOU  
WOULDN'T HAVE BEEN ABLE TO TELL THEM APART!  
WHY? OH, COME, COME! USE YOUR HEAD! WHAT  
HAPPENED TO HEMME? HOW SHOULD I KNOW?  
WHAT HAPPENED TO ALL OF THE HEADS THAT  
ROLLED DURING 'THE NIGHT OF TERROR'? HMMM!  
SOUNDS LIKE SPORT MATERIAL! THERE! I'LL HAVE  
TO LOOK INTO IT! OH, BY THE WAY! ALL MY  
BACK ISSUES ARE AVAILABLE! THE CRYPT-  
KEEPER'S CORNER TELLS YOU HOW TO GET YOURS!  
THAT WINDS IT UP, KIDDIES? I HOPE YOUR  
HUNGER IS SATISFIED!  
WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT  
IN THE HAUNT OF HORROR!  
BYE FOR NOW!

# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

THE  
MURDER OF  
THE  
MURDERER



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FAMOUS 1950s EC COMICS!

TE  
RR  
OR



NO. 12  
JUNE

TALES



200  
27¢  
CANADA

FROM THE

CRYPT

FEATURING



THE CRYPT KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE GRINNING MAN



## BACK ISSUES!!

THE COMIC YOU HOLD IN YOUR HANDS IS PART OF THE CHRONOLOGICAL, FACSIMILE REPRINTING OF THE FAMOUS (AND INFAMOUS!) EC COMICS LINE OF THE EARLY 1950s! WE STARTED WITH THE FIRST ISSUE OF EACH TITLE AND ARE ON OUR WAY TO THE BITTER END! GET ON THE SANDWAGON, AND FILL IN THE GAPS IN YOUR COLLECTION FROM THIS BACKLIST!



100



**Table 1**

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! SO YOU'RE BACK FOR MORE, BUT CAN'T GET ENOUGH HORROR, EH? WELL, I'LL GIVE YOU YOUR DIME'S WORTH THIS TIME! HEH! IT'S ME... YOUR HOST... **THE CRYPT-KEEPER!** HEHE! WHAT CHILLER CAN I TELL YOU THAT WILL MAKE YOUR BLOOD RUN COLD AND THE HAIR ON YOUR NECK CRAWL? AHAH! I KNOW JUST THE ONE! THIS IS A REAL SPINE-TINGLER! I CALL IT... AFFECTIONATELY...

## BARGAIN IN DEATH!



MY STORY HAS ITS BEGINNING ON A COOL OCTOBER EVENING IN 1922? IN THEIR ROOM IN THE DORMITORY OF LOGANWOOD MEDICAL COLLEGE, TWO YOUNG STUDENTS, SIT DEJECTEDLY, THEIR FACES SULKY...

WHAT CAN WE DO, WELL? UNLESS WE RAISE SOME MONEY, WE WON'T BE ABLE TO PAY OUR LABORATORY FEES!

AND WITHOUT THAT, OF COURSE, WE CAN'T CONTINUE WITH OUR STUDIES! DISSECTING THOSE GADAVERS IS REQUIRED FOR ANATOMY CREDIT!







CRIPES! I DIDN'T KNOW  
STUFF'S GONT SO  
MUCH! THAT'S WHAT  
THE LAB TEE COVERES,  
YOU KNOW!

YEAH I  
KNOW! SAY!  
WHAT IF WE  
SUPPLIED  
OUR OWN  
CORPSE?



WOULD YOU  
MEAN...

DON'T LOOK  
SHOCKED, BO!  
IT'S BEEN DONE  
BEFORE! WE  
JUST DID UP A  
FRESH ONE IN  
THE TOWN CEM-  
ETERY!



STEAL A BODY  
FOR A GRAVE?

EITHER THAT  
OR WE DON'T  
BECOME SUCCESS-  
FUL! TAKE YOUR  
CHOICE!



HEH, HEH! NOW THAT WE'VE SET SID AND MEL, AND  
HEARD THEIR PROBLEM, LET'S LOOK IN ON THE SECOND  
SCENE OF OUR BRILLY LITTLE TRAP! THIS IS TAKING  
PLACE FAR ACROSS TOWN AT ALMOST THE SAME

MOMENT.

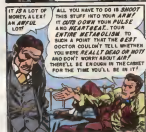
IT'S CRAZY, ALEX,  
ABSOLUTELY CRAZY! I  
WON'T AGREE TO IT!

BUT IT WILL WORK,  
GEORGE! I KNOW!  
I SAW WHAT THIS  
GUY CAN DO! WE  
NEED THE MONEY, DON'T  
WE?



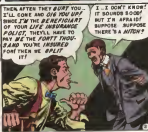
YES! OF COURSE! BUT,  
TO GIVE UP EVERY-  
THING, START ALL  
OVER...

WITH TWENTY THOU-  
SAND DOLLARS OF  
INSURANCE MONEY!



IT IS A LOT OF  
MONEY, ALEX!  
AN ANNUAL  
LOSS!

ALL YOU HAVE TO DO IS SHOOT  
THIS STUFF INTO YOUR ARM!  
IT GOTS DOWN YOUR PULSE  
AND HEARTBEAT. YOUR  
ENTIRE METABOLISM TO  
SUCH A POINT THAT THE BEST  
DOCTOR COULDN'T TELL WHETHER  
YOU WERE REALLY DEAD OR NOT!  
AND DON'T WORRY ABOUT AIN!  
THERE'LL BE ENOUGH IN THE CASKET  
FOR THE TIME YOU'LL BE IN IT!



THEN, AFTER THEY SHOT YOU -  
I'LL COME AND GET YOU UP!  
WHEN I'M THE BENEFICIARY  
OF YOUR LIFE INSURANCE  
POLICY, THEY'LL HAVE TO  
PAY ME THE FORTY THOU-  
SAND YOU'VE INSURED  
FOR! THEN WE SPLIT  
IT!

I... I DON'T KNOW!  
IT SOUNDS GOOD!  
BUT I'M AFRAID!  
SUPPOSE, SUPPOSE  
THERE'S A KITCH?



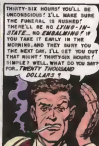
DON'T BE A FOOL, GEORGE! WHAT CAN GO WRONG?

SUPPOSE THE INSURANCE COMPANY SUSPECTS?



HOW CAN THEY? IT WILL LOOK LIKE **HEART-FAILURE!** I'LL BE AT HOME WITH A **PERFECT ALIBI!** NO ONE ELSE HAS ANY **MOTIVE!**

HOW LONG WILL THE **EFFECT** OF THE **DRUG** LAST?



THIRTY-SIX HOURS! YOU'LL BE UNCONSCIOUS! I'LL MAKE SURE THE FUNERAL IS RUSHED! THERE'LL BE NO **LIVING-IN-STATE... NO EMBALMING!** IF YOU TAKE IT EARLY IN THE MORNING, AND THEY BURY YOU THE NEXT DAY, I'LL GET YOU OUT THAT NIGHT! THIRTY-SIX HOURS! SIMPLE? WELL, WHAT DO YOU SAY? FOR...**TWENTY THOUSAND DOLLARS?**



HHMM! SEEMS LIKE **EVERYBODY'S** GOT PROBLEMS! WELL! LET'S HURRY BACK ACROSS TOWN AND SEE WHAT **JED** AND **MEI** HAVE DECIDED...

ALL RIGHT, WELL, I'LL **DO** IT!

ATRA BOY, **SID**? WE'LL GET OLD GLEN TO HELP US! HE'LL DO **ANYTHING** FOR MONEY!



HEH, HEH! THE PLOT THICKENS, EH, KIDNEST AS FOR ALEX AND GEORGE, SURELY YOU MUST HAVE ANTICIPATED...

I'LL **ASSURE** ALEX! BUT IT'S AGAINST MY BETTER JUDGEMENT...

DON'T WORRY ABOUT IT, GEORGE! I'LL TAKE CARE OF **EVERYTHING!** HERE'S THE HYPODERMIC AND THE DRUG! TAKE A **FULL SHOT!**



AND FOR **BOB'S** SAKE, SET RID OF THE BOTTLE AND NEEDLE BEFORE THE STUFF TAKES EFFECT! YOU'LL HAVE ABOUT **TEN MINUTES!**

I'LL BE CAREFUL, ALEX! DON'T WORRY!



SO THAT'S THE SITUATION, FIENDES! LIKE IT? GOOD! NOW FOR THE COMPLICATIONS! READY? HERE GOES! THE NEXT MORNING, GEORGE'S LANDLADY DISCOVERS HIS BODY...

EEEE

# A DOCTOR IS BURNED BY THE HYSTERICAL WOMAN.

THIS MAN IS DEAD! LOOKS LIKE HEART-FAILURE! MUST HAVE HAPPENED EARLY THIS MORNING! DID HE HAVE ANY RELATIVES?

NO! ONLY A FRIEND! I'LL DO FOR HIM!



# ALEX RECEIVES THE BAD NEWS...

WHAT? GEORGE... DEAD? GOOD LORD, WHAT A SHOCK! I'D BETTER COME BACK WITH YOU AND MAKE ARRANGEMENTS!

SOR... SOR! HE... HE WAS SUCH A GOOD MAN! SUCH A GOOD MAN!



# Alex ARRANGES GEORGE'S FUNERAL.

BUT, IT'S CUSTOMARY TO WAIT SEVERAL DAYS...

NO! GEORGE WOULDN'T HAVE WANTED IT THAT WAY! THE FUNERAL WILL BE HELD TOMORROW... IN THE AFTERNOON!



# THAT EVENING, IN THEIR DOWN-PORT ROOM.

LOOK, SID! WE'RE IN LUCK! SOME FOLKS SAID GEORGE DIED THIS MORNING! THEY'RE BURYING HIM TOMORROW AFTERNOON!

COME! LET'S GO SEE CLEM! WE'LL DIG UP THE BODY TOMORROW NIGHT!



# SID AND MEL FIND CLEM, THE BATHEN STUPID COLLEGE HANDY-MAN, AND EXPLAIN THEIR PLAN.

WAL... I DUNNO, FELLERS! WHEN UP A CORPSE? THAT'S kinda SCARY BUSINESS!

WE'LL MAKE IT WORTH YOUR WHILE, CLEM! SAY... FIVE DOLLARS?



WAL... FIVE DOLLARS... I WANT!

GOOD! MEET US HERE TOMORROW NIGHT!

BRING THE TOOLS!



# THE NEXT DAY, TOWARD LATE AFTERNOON, GEORGE, UNDER THE INFLUENCE OF THE DRUG... IS 'LAIN TO REST...

HE WAS... A GOOD MAN!

LOWER THE COFFIN!



AFTER GEORGE'S CASKET IS LOWERED INTO THE TAWNING BLACK PIT, THE GRAVE-DIGGERS STOP FORWARD...



FROM A DISTANCE, ALEX, GEORGE'S BEST FRIEND AND BENEFICIARY, SMILES AS THE SOFT CRAWLING EARTH IS SHOVELLED INTO GEORGE'S GRAVE...



WHEN ALEX RETURNS TO HIS ROOMING HOUSE, A STRANGER IS WAITING FOR HIM...

MY NAME IS FORTNEY. I'M FROM GOSMOPOLITAN LIFE. ARE YOU ALEX LAWRENCE?



YOU ARE THE BENEFICIARY NAMED IN THE FORTY-THOUSAND DOLLAR POLICY OF THE RECENTLY DECEASED GEORGE ARKMAN...



NO? WE'VE EXAMINED THE CERTIFICATE OF DEATH! EVERYTHING SEEMS TO BE IN ORDER!

WELL? WHAT DO YOU WANT TO SEE ME ABOUT, THEN?



WHY, TO PRESENT YOU WITH YOUR CASH, SISTER LAWRENCE! HERE YOU ARE!



AS DARKNESS BLANKETS THE TOWN AND THE LITTLE DRAB-LOOKING CEMETERY, ALEX LAWRENCE HASTILY PAGES...



MEANWHILE, DEEP DOWN UNDER THE MOLEY BLACK EARTH IN THE CEMETERY, SOMETHING STIRRS/GEORGE IS COMING TO...



GEORGE REACHES UP TO THE SATIN-LINED LID OF HIS UNDERGROUND PRISON...



AT THAT MOMENT, ALEX STANDS ON A USED-CAR LOT, SURVEYING A SHINY BLUE CONVERTIBLE...



LATER THAT NIGHT, AS GEORGE LIES BURIED SIX FEET BELOW THE CEMETERY'S GRAVESTONE REDECKED SURFACE...



SLOWLY, THE LID OF THE DESERTED CEMETERY SPRINGS OPEN, ITS RUSTED HINGES SCREAMING IN PROTEST AS THREE FIGURES ENTER...



3. FREELY, SID AND MEL, THE TWO MEDICAL STUDENTS, MAKE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE GRAVE-MOUNDED TO THE FRESH ONE...



DOWN BELOW, GEORGE HEARS A MUFFLED THUD, AS CLEM'S SPADE CUTS INTO THE DARK SOIL.



LITTLE BY LITTLE, CLEM'S SPADE BOUNCES OUT AN EVER DEEPENING HOLE AS THE MINUTES TICK BY...



FAR ACROSS TOWN, THE MOTOR OF THE BLUE CONVERTIBLE HUMS AS ALEX, AT THE WHEEL, GUIDES IT OUT OF THE LOT...



THE HOLLOW ROOM OF CLEM'S SPADE STRIKING THE COFFIN ECHOES ACROSS THE DESERTED CEMETERY



CLEM SLIPS THE SHARP EDGE OF THE CROW-BAR UNDER THE LID AND PRESSED DOWN! THE COFFIN SHUDDERS, THEN THE LID GIVES WAY.



GEORGE, GASPING FOR AIR, COVERED WITH PERSPIRATION, ITS BOLT UPRIGHT IN THE COFFIN! CLEM'S EYES WIDEN... AS HE SCREAMS...



ALEX, IN HIS NEW RED SHINY BLUE CONVERTIBLE, IS HITTING EIGHTY AS HE LEAVES TOWN ON THE ROAD THAT SITS THE CEMETERY...



HEH, HEH! HOPE YOU'RE COMFORTABLE IN THERE, GEORGE!

SUDDENLY, TWO FIGURES LOOM UP BEFORE HIM... SCAMPERING ALONG THE ROAD...



LOOK OUT!

ALEX SWERVES TO AVOID HITTING THE FRIGHTENED, RACING STUDENTS! THE CAR HURTLES ACROSS THE ROAD TOWARD THE CEMETERY FENCE...



EEEEAAAAAAGH!

LATER, IN A DARK CORNER OF A LOCAL BAR, SID AND MEL COMPOSE THEMSELVES WITH SEVERAL SHOTS OF HARD LIQUOR...

LOSD, MEL! IF I DIDN'T SEE IT WITH MY OWN EYES, I WOULDN'T HAVE BELIEVED IT! THAT GORPHE ACTUALLY BAT UP!

AND THAT POOR GUY IN THE CONVERTIBLE? HE TRIED TO AVOID HITTING SID AND KILLED HIMSELF!



FINALLY, SID AND MEL RETURN TO THEIR ROOM AS THEY OPEN THE DOOR...



THE LESS SAID ABOUT TONIGHT, THE BETTER!

GEE? I WONDER WHAT HAPPENED TO GLEN?

HERE I WAS! I BEEN WAITIN' ON THAT!

GLEN! THAT'LL BE FIVE BUCKS, PLEASE! THAT'S WHAT YUH PROVIDED ME FOR THE BODY!

GOOD LORD, SID? LOOK!



THE TWO MEDICAL STUDENTS STARE IN HORROR AT THE PROSTRATE BODY OF GEORGE ARKMAN STRETCHED OUT ON THE FLOOR... ITS HEAD CRUSHED FROM THE BLOW OF A CROW BAR.



HEH, HEH! YEP! OLD GLEN REALLY **GAVE AROGAS**... BY GEORGE! AND SID AND MEL HAVE THE **STIFF** THEY NEEDED! AS FOR ALEX... WELL... HE'S PRETTY BLUE... FROM **BAR PAINT**? THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GET ALL WRAPPED UP IN SOMETHING! NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO MY FELLOW **GHOULBROTHERS**, THE **NIGHT-KEEPER**, WHO'S WRITING TO RELATE **ANY** TERROR-TALES! SEE YOU LATER WITH INFORMATION ON HOW TO OBTAIN BACK ISSUES FROM ME! IT'S ALL COVERED IN MY COLUMN, **THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S CORNER!**



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

NEVER BEEN HYPNOTIZED? NOW THEN YOU'LL LIKE THE CHILLING FARM I'M ABOUT TO SPIN IT CONCERNS A HYPNOTIST... HIS WIFE... AND... WELL, WHY NOT COME INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR... PULL UP THAT COFFIN... SIT YOURSELF UPON ITS WORMY LID... AND LISTEN! YOU ALL KNOW WHO I AM! YES! THE VAULT-KEEPER! READY? THEN, I'LL BEGIN! I CALL THIS HORROR TALE...

## ANTS IN HER TRANCE!



THE GUESTS AT THE DINNER PARTY TURNED AS THEIR HEALTHY HOSTESS, MRS JUSTINE FLEETWOOD, CLAPPED HER HANDS FOR ATTENTION! BEHIND HER STOOD A STRIKING DARK-HAIRED MAN WITH BLACK PIERCING EYES! BESIDE HIM, A NERVOUS FAIR - LOOKING WOMAN FIDGETED WITH HER NECKLACE.

ALL RIGHT, MY FRIENDS! IF I CAN HAVE YOUR ATTENTION, I HAVE A SURPRISE FOR YOU ALL! I'VE INVITED A FAMOUS PERSON TO ENTERTAIN... SOMEONE I'M SURE YOU'VE ALL HEARD ABOUT! THIS... IS LEOPOLD MONETTI!

NOW EXCITING! HE'S THE AMAZING HYPNOTIST!





LEOPOLD MONETTI STEPPED FORWARD AND BOWED GRACEFULLY! THEN HE TURNED TO THE PALE THIN WOMAN AT HIS SIDE...

THIS IS MY WIFE...EVETTE! TONIGHT, AT YOUR CHARMING HOSTESS'S REQUEST, I WILL PRESENT FOR YOUR ENJOYMENT A DEMONSTRATION OF THE ASTOUNDING ART OF HYPNOTISM!

WILL YOU ALL PLEASE FIND SEATS?



THE GUESTS SCURRIED ABOUT CHANGING CHAIRS TO AND FRO UNTIL THEY WERE ALL SEATED BEFORE THE HYPNOTIST AND HIS WIFE...

NOW THAT YOU ARE SETTLED I WILL BEGIN! MY WIFE HERE WILL BE MY SUBJECT IN THIS DEMONSTRATION! FIRST, I WILL PLACE HER INTO A *HYPNOTIC TRANCE*! ONCE PLACED UNDER THIS SPELL, SHE WILL OBEY MY EVERY WISH! ONLY AFTER I UTTER THE WORDS 'SNAP OUT OF IT!' WILL SHE BE REVIVED!



LEOPOLD TURNED TO HIS PALE WIFE AND PASSED HIS HANDS OVER HER FACE SEVERAL TIMES! THEN HE BEGAN TO STARE INTO HER EYES, WHILE MURMURING INCOHERENT PHRASES! SOON, EVETTE'S EYES GLAZED...HER BODY BECAME RIGID...



THERE! EVETTE IS NOW IN A HYPNOTIC TRANCE! HER WILL IS MINE TO COMMAND!

THE MIND IS A WONDERFUL THING, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! IT HAS FULL CONTROL OVER EVERY PART OF THE BODY! NORMALLY, WE DO NOT FULLY USE THE POWERS OF THE MIND! BUT, UNDER HYPNOTISM, THESE POWERS ARE BROUGHT INTO PLAY! FOR EXAMPLE...



MONETTI TURNED TO HIS WIFE



EVETTE! GRIN!

EVETTE'S HAKEN FEATURES SAGGED! SHE SIGHED PITIFULLY AND THEN BEGAN TO WHIMPER! HER EYES FILLED WITH TEARS! THEY SPILLED OVER HER EYELIDS AND RAN DOWN HER CHEEKS...



YOU SEE! AT MY COMMAND, SHE INSTANTLY GRIEFS!

A STUNNING!

INCREDIBLE!

MONETTI TURNED TO HIS WIFE ONCE AGAIN...



EVETTE! PERSPIRE!

SMALL BEADS OF PERSPIRATION  
GUSTED FROM THE PORES IN EYETTE'S  
BALLYHOG FACE! SOON HER ENTIRE  
COUNTERPART WAS SKINNING HER.

NO. AT MY WORD!  
PERSPIRATION?

UNBELIEVABLE!

FANTASTIC!



AND NOW, FOR MY FINAL DEMONSTRATION! IS THERE ONE AMONG  
YOU WHO IS EITHER A  
PHYSICIAN OR HAS A  
KNOWLEDGE OF  
MEDICINE?

I WAS  
A NURSE!



GOOD! WILL YOU WHOLLY COME  
UP! I AM GOING TO DO SOMETHING  
THAT SCIENCE CLAIMS IS  
IMPOSSIBLE! I AM  
GOING TO COMMAND  
EYETTE TO STOP  
HER HEART FROM  
BEATING!

WHAT?  
I DON'T  
BELIEVE  
IT!



THE LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN WHO HAD VOLUNTEERED  
CAME UP TO THE HYPNOTIST AND HIS ENTHRALLLED  
WIFE.

KINDLY FEEL MY WIFE'S  
PULSE, IF YOU WILL!

I... I FEEL IT!  
IT'S RAPID...  
STRONG.



ALL RIGHT, EYETTE!  
STOP YOUR  
HEART!

GAFF! HER PULSE!  
IT'S STOPPED!  
SHE'S DEAD!



DO NOT BE ALARMED, YOUNG  
LADY! I HAVE MERELY TO  
UTTER THE WORDS 'SNAP  
OUT OF IT' AND MY WIFE  
WILL BE RELEASED FROM  
HER HYPNOTIC TRANCE AND  
HER HEART WILL BEAT ONCE  
MORE!

WELL, SNAP IT THEN,  
FOR GOD'S SAKE!  
HURRY!



SNAP OUT OF IT,  
EYETTE!

WOMAN!  
WHERE AM  
I... OH...

THANK  
THE  
LORD!



THE COLOR RETURNED TO EYETTE'S CHEEKS AND SHE MOVED ABOUT THE GUESTS CHATTING SATISFIEDLY! MEANWHILE, LEOPOLD HAD ENDED HIS VOLUNTARY ASSISTANT IN CONVERSATION...

YOU SEEMED WORRIED FOR A WHILE, MISS... MISS...

APPLETON? SELMA APPLETON? YES! I WAS!

YOU WERE IMPRESSED, THEN, MISS APPLETON? IT IS... MISS!

YES! IT'S MISS APPLETON! OH, I WAS IMPRESSED! YET! YOU'RE WONDERFUL!

PERHAPS I CAN SEE YOU TOMORROW SAT FOR LUNCH? WE CAN TALK FURTHER... ON HYPNOTISM!

OH, I'D BE DELIGHTED! MAKE IT TWELVE-THIRTY? THE BLUE CANDLE?

THE NEXT DAY, SELMA APPLETON MET LEOPOLD MORETTI FOR LUNCH! IN THE DINNERS OF THE CANDLE-LIT CAFE... HIS EYES BORED INTO HER AS HE CONFESSED...

I HAD TO SEE YOU AGAIN, SELMA! LAST NIGHT, WHEN I FIRST SAW YOU... I KNEW IMMEDIATELY! IT TOOK ONLY A MOMENT...

P... PLEASE, LEOPOLD! SOMEONE WILL SEE US!

LET THEM! I MUST TELL YOU! I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU! YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL! EXCITING! DESIRABLE! I FELL IN LOVE WITH YOU THE MOMENT I SAW YOU!

BUT, LEOPOLD! YOUR WIFE! YOU... YOU'RE MARRIED!

AND IF I WERE NOT MARRIED? WOULD YOU CONSIDER...?

I... I DON'T KNOW! I... I LIKE YOU! I... THANK SO! YES! I THINK I WOULD!

AND SO, A SECRET LOVE AFFAIR BETWEEN SELMA AND LEOPOLD BEGAN! THEY SAW EACH OTHER OFTEN AFTER THAT! FINALLY... ONE NIGHT, AT SELMA'S APARTMENT...

IT CAN'T GO ON LIKE THIS, LEO! THIS MEETING SECRETLY, BEHIND LOCKED DOORS... IN DARK STREETS...

WHAT CAN I DO, SELMA? EYETTE WOULD NEVER GIVE ME A DIVORCE!

SILMA SLIPPED DOWN BESIDE LEOPOLD THERE WAS A WILD GLEAM IN HER EYES.

IF...IF SHE WERE DEAD, LEO, WE COULD BE MARRIED!

YOU MEAN... KILL HER?



IT COULD LOOK LIKE A NATURAL DEATH! YOU REMEMBER HOW WE MET? YOU WERE DEMONSTRATING HOW YOU COULD COMMAND EVELLE TO STOP HER HEART...

YOU WERE THE ONE WHO FELT HER PULSE! YOU THOUGHT SHE WAS DEAD!



EXACTLY! ANY DOCTOR WOULD HAVE THOUGHT SO! YOU REMEMBER YOU ASSURED ME...

I TOLD YOU THAT THE WORDS 'SNAP OUT OF IT' WOULD REVIVE MEN! THEY ALWAYS DO! WE'VE USED THE SAME OATH FOR YEARS!



SUPPOSE YOU USED OTHER WORDS! SUPPOSE YOU 'FAILED' TO REVIVE HER!

SHE'D BE DEAD!



AND YOU'D BE FREE! THE POLICE WOULD CALL IT AN UNFORTUNATE ACCIDENT! THEY COULDN'T PROVE INTENT! YOU'D BE BROKE-HEARTED!

YES! VERY! I'LL DO IT, SILMA!



THE NEXT NIGHT, LEOPOLD AND EVELLE HAD AN ENGAGEMENT TO DEMONSTRATE HYPNOTISM! LEOPOLD HAD MADE UP HIS MIND...

YES! I'LL FEEL HER PULSE! IT'S VERY STRONG!

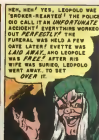
ALL RIGHT, EVELLE! STOP YOUR HEART!



GOOD LORD! HER PULSE HAS STOPPED! WAKE HER UP, MAN!

WAKE UP, EVELLE! OR... I SAID WAKE UP, EVELLE!





SELMA BEGAN TO RAVE! HER  
SCREAMING VOICE ECHOED  
ACROSS THE HEADSTONES...

WE'RE MURDERERS!  
MURDERERS!  
THANK GOD  
THE PLACE  
IS DESERTED!  
NO ONE WILL  
HEAR HERE!

LEOPOLD GRABBED SELMA'S  
SHOULDER! HE SHOOK HER  
ROUGELY...

SNAP OUT OF IT!  
YOU'RE HYSTERICAL!  
SOR...  
SOR...

THEN THEY TURNED TO GO! AS THEY  
MADE THEIR WAY ACROSS THE ROWS OF  
GRAVES, A SMALL FIGURE APPEARED IN  
THE MOON BEHIND EYETTE'S TOMB-  
STONE! THE GRAVE WAS CRACKING  
OPEN!

SOR... SOR... IF YOU WERE  
ALIVE, SELMA,  
WE SHOULDN'T  
HAVE COME!

A ROTTED HAMBLECRABLING AND FOUL SMELLING  
REACHED UP INTO THE GATHERING TWILIGHT!  
LEOPOLD AND SELMA WERE JUST DISAPPEARING INTO  
THE DARK...

IT'S JUST THAT I THOUGHT  
IT WOULD LOOK GOOD! I  
DIDN'T THINK IT WOULD  
BREAK YOU UP LIKE  
THAT!

LEOPOLD AND SELMA REACHED THE CEMETERY GATE!  
IT TOWERED ABOVE THEM... RISING TWELVE FEET INTO  
THE FALLING DARKNESS... ENDING AT THE TOP IN RAZOR-  
SHARP SPIRES...

LEOPOLD! THE  
GATE!  
GOOD LORD! IT'S  
LOOKED! CHAINED...  
AND LOCKED!

SUDDENLY THERE WAS A SOUND  
BEHIND THE TRAPPED COUPLE!  
THE RAUSSEATING OODOR OF DECAY  
AND PUTRESCENCE BURNED THEIR  
NOSTRILS! THEY TURNED...

OH, MY EYETTE!  
GOD!

THE MASSOT-COVERED BLIND  
THING LUMBERED TOWARD THEM!  
BITS OF ROTTED FLESH FELL  
FROM ITS CHALKY BONES! GLOBS  
OF GRAVE YARD EARTH SLIPPED  
FROM ITS MOLDY CLOTHES! IT  
REACHED OUT A DECAYED HAND  
TOWARD THEM... PASSING IT  
BEFORE THEIR PALED FACES.

YAAAAAAH! EYETTE!

WELL, WHEN THEY FOUND SELMA AND  
LED THE NEXT MORNING! FUNNY  
THING! THERE WASN'T A MARK ON  
EITHER OF THEM! THE GARDENER  
SAID IT LOOKED LIKE HEART-  
FAILURE! THEIR EYES WERE  
BULGING OUT OF THEIR SOCKETS  
THOUGH! HE SAID IT WAS AS IF  
THEY'D BEEN HYPOXIZED! HEN,  
HEN! WELL! WE KNOW DIFFERENT.  
BUT A BETTER NAME FOR IT WOULD  
BE "CORPSENTIZED"! OH, BY THE  
WAY! FOUR EYES WILL BULGE FROM  
THEIR SOCKETS WHEN YOU SEE BACK  
GARDEN! THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S  
CORNER, WHICH  
FOLLOWS THE  
TEXT, TELLS YOU  
HOW TO GET  
YOURSELF!

THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S  
CORNER, WHICH  
FOLLOWS THE  
TEXT, TELLS YOU  
HOW TO GET  
YOURSELF!



# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear "CRYPTY" (Crypt-Keeper)

I know your nickname is "CRYPTY" I wanted to say that I loved the story "I repeat!" in VALLEY 10 (I'm not writing good because I'm writing with a PEN THAT DOESN'T HAVE INK) I loved the line when Marty was all in the story stuff and says "IT IS LIKE FLY PAPER!" I imagined Marty's voice like a New Orleans type

Ramiro J. Roman

Glendale, CA

But, y'all... Get some ink, my old eyes aren't what they used to be!

—CK

Do you and the Vault-Keeper ever fight? Sincerely,

Chad J. Ben

Peaceville City, GA

Sure, we fight—we fight The Old Witch!

—OW

It's me, DARK DIMON who was the Crypt-Keeper before you? Do you have to pay taxes and how old are you?

Dark Demon

address unknown

I am the original Keeper! None authentic without this signature: <C I I am exempt from death, and I am exempt from taxes! Eat your heart out!

—CK

I'm an average-sized fat who loves your stories as old my dad when he was a kid. "Judy, You're Not Yourself Today" definitely ruled. That was the weirdest story ever written. Who wrote it? Do you have any background on it? I also read the one about the insane class kids ending up with epilepsy. Who's the probe who wrote that one? It was cool and ruled, too. Another one that ruled was the one with the poor sister and her brother who turns into glop. That one was so grim it made Kafka look like the Dark Club. Other than EC I like the early early SPIDERMAN comics. PLASTICMAN is also cool. But if I had to have one thing to say, it would be, "Judy, You're Not Yourself Today" ruled. As does the Crypt-Keeper. He's boss and George!

Nat Hirsch

Labadie, CT

And, I'm gone, best! Let's see—we're into the second year, the art is by Wood with no particular reason to believe Harrison was involved; an art excuse Feldstein wrote the script & like the psychic angle is less mechanistic than lots of Feldstein. —CK

How you been hanging? Probably at the end of a rope, ha, ha. You can print my address

Adam Griesbaum

4871 Cleveland RD  
Brookline, OH 44111

Yes, ha-ha. I get axes for you; when at the end of your rope, keep your trap (teeth) shut!

—CK

"ABRA CADAVEN"

I just got issue #10, and you guys sure didn't disappoint me.

"Drawn And Quartered!" Excellent! Oh, and in your painting at the beginning, isn't that the werewolf from "By The Fright Of The Silvery Moon" in the upper right-hand corner? "The Borrowed Body" Good plot, but not as well carried-out as I would have expected "Within Burial Mound" As much as I hate to say it, I could not get into

this story. This was the first EC story I've ever seen without at least one exclamation point. After reading it, I can understand why "Theatrical Pluff" had as good as "Drawn And Quartered!", but excellent just the same.

As for "Abra Cadaver," it's about a doctor whose career is ruined when his brother's cruel practical joke gives him a heart attack. He gets back at his brother by killing him and giving him a voodoo drug to keep his brain alive. He then pretends to cut his brother's brain out as a practical joke. The joke gives the brother a heart attack, and kills him. So, can ya ID it for me? Keep printing my address.

Myron James

RR 4 BOX 141  
Rockville, IN 47872

I don't have to ID it, "issues..."

—CK

About the new CRYPT movie, "Damon Knight" see this film! I give it two (severed) thumbs up!

I wish people would stop complaining about the HBO show. TV and comics are two different mediums and so of course the stories have to be a little different. True, the show goes too far sometimes, but for the most part, I think it is worthy of its title. I am certain that you and the HBO CK are the same, after all, if you were an old man in the '70s, by now you would probably be a rotting corpse.

Finally, I have a helpful note for Myron James, who asked in which issue the story "Abra Cadaver" could be found. You noticed that you never ran a story with that title. This is because the story was originally called "Dead Right!" HBO had already used that title with a completely different story. They obviously wanted to use the original story later on, so they changed the title to "Abra Cadaver." You can print my address.

David Lowery II

1018 Grossa PT  
Irving, TX 75061

Now the question is, what is the plot of the HBO "Dead Right?" (Our "Dead Right" ran in CRYPT #37—was it our #21.)

—CK

## MORE HBO STUFF

Are the covers you use now the same covers that were used on the original comics? Which SHOCK issue will (or has) reprinted "Cannon Death"? I see that one on HBO and loved it and would like to read it.

Tyler Compton

Folsom, CA

Yup, original covers. You'll find "Cannon Death" in SHOCK 5, which is available from us as a back issue (art by the great Reed Crandall).

—CK

## NEXT ISSUE



I always tape your TV show. My dad loves it and so do I. I watched the Santa Claus one on Saturday night, I loved it! I want that one to come on every Saturday night!

Tiffany Wise

Stafford, VA

And on tape, it sent

—CK

There was a "Crypt" episode with Larry (L.A. Law) Drake about an escaped mental patient dressed as Santa Claus who terrorizes a winter cabin, which magazine is it in? There was an episode starring Lou Diamond Phillips and Prescilla Presley called "Ol' a Night That Ends Well" where can I find it? Why aren't these "Crypt" in on video? I have to watch the creepy re-runs that are taped down! Finally, why is the case show going off? I saw a preview for it in a magazine.

James C. Puckett

Houston, TX

I've been assuming the bogus Santa is from "....And All Through the House....", VAULT #38 (but is our VAULT #4) and "Old's Best" will be in CRYPT #34 (our CRYPT #8, but also in 84-pg RCP CRYPT #2 available now). The other questions are for order heads than mine.

—CK

I have CRYPT comics and I watch your show on HBO and FOX, but I like the show on HBO better because they don't leave the good parts out.

Jack Comer, age 12

St Charles MO

Makes them kinda creepy, do you think? Or, does it make them more elderly entertaining?

—CK

I am very excited about the HBO "Tales from the Crypt" season finale that airs on February 15. "You, Murderer." It was a brilliant idea to have Humphrey Bogart "resurrected" for it.

My favorite episodes of your show are "Well Cooked Hens" and "The Thing from the Grave." Please print my address.

E Grand CYN LH

Chad Rushkoff (OK, I)

Connet, NY 11727

I am of two minds on computer "resurrections": at least the producers of TV's "Crypt" know the significance of the images they'd be tampering with. Better than their soft drink guys!

—CK

I have collected CRYPT Volume 1 and 2. If you don't really like The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch why do you let those marions be in your comic posts? Please print my address. I would like to have a pen pal.

Alexander Onosco

10501 Sam McQuinn  
South Gate, CA 90280

I look as good by comparison!

—CK

I love your stories. Me and my big brother collect your comics. I would like a pen pal.

Carole Drake

681 E Garden RD  
Visalia, NJ

CRYPT #10 was awesome! "Drawn and Quartered" was the best story in the mag. "The Borrowed Body" made no sense to me—how do they switch bodies? "Indian Burial Mound" was the classic plot: man does something mean and dies for it. "Political Pull" was exciting, but a little predictable. Please print my address.

Brandon Hendrix

POB 117  
Broken Bow, OK 74726

I read your comics and watch your shows. I enjoy the blood, gore and murder. I enjoy drawing comics of my own. I have very few friends but the friends I have love CRYPT. Could I be in your fan club?

Dustin (Crypt Jr) Price

Coushatta, LA

Three of the most recent fan-groups are: HONOR FROM THE CRYPT OF PSA, Ed Ivy DR, Mahwah, NJ 04047; THE EC REGISTER, Abner Dean Productions,

8801 Atlantic AV, Margate City, NJ 08403 and THE INTERNATIONAL E.C. FAN CLUB, 6847 Calypso ST, Philadelphia, PA 19120.

—CK

Do you have Crypt FOGS? If you do give me some or tell me where they are.

Greg Miller, age 8

Reisterstown MD

I had the chickenFOGS ones. Didn't like it; all that scurrying (dark those chickens!). Ma, you got me. But I show up in the darndest places. Keep looking!

—CK

What up? I was in New York last night around 11:00 and I saw the comic store and I walked out with the first 3 issues just like that. What kind of music do you like?

Keith Diphick

Upper Merionide, NJ

I assume you paid for those comics before anything! Music is my sers in the ringing of a cash register when you buy EC comics!

—CK

I saw the "Tales from the Crypt: Demon Knight" movie last week. It was horrible. Identifying, gruesome, disgusting, and nightmare-inducing. I loved it! Please print my address. I would like to hear from other TFC fans.

Garret S. Haeberl, age 22

818 W McClary

Pearle, IL 61804-3380

[Re: the CRYPT #1 look]. What about the wrinkles? Hey, wanna make something of it? Not long 'n prosper.

Carl "Crypt" Howe

Morton IL

All I'm saying is if I had awf wrinkles, I would make a whole "Weather Old Witch!"

—CK

Why don't you wear your hood like everyone else?

Mark Passafium

Union, NY

Get not hood, get not hat, get no shoulder, get no belt. Get no sock, get no shoe, so depressed, my robe is blue! (Am I you sorry you asked?)

—CK

Only getting one EC comic each month wasn't enough. So I decided to subscribe to your others! Are you going to have new stories beside reprints? Do you need help with them. I am your man. Print address. I would like a Crypt pen pal.

Zac Gale

2324 Willard ST

Saginaw, MI 48602

No place for new material. Be sure your pen has ink (see R. Roman, above).

—CK

## NEXT ISSUE







YOU'LL SHUDDER OVER THIS ONE  
EVEN THOUGH YOU MIGHT CALL IT ...

# A-CORNY STORY



ARNOLD EVERETTE STRODE DOWN THE AISLE BETWEEN THE ROWS OF DESKS THAT LINED HIS OFFICE, GLANCING FROM ONE TO THE OTHER. HE SMILED TO HIMSELF AS HE NOTED THE OCCUPANT OF EACH. YES! THINGS WERE WORKING OUT FINE. THERE WAS ONLY ONE MAN LEFT. ONE MAN TO GET RID OF. OLD MAN PIETRO! ARNOLD STOPPED BEFORE THE GREYHAIRED, EARLY PIETRO'S DESK AND LOOKED DOWN AT THE GAUNT FIGURE.



MR. WILL YOU SEE ME IN MY OFFICE, MR. PIETRO? SAY TEN MINUTES?

WHY YES, SIR!

ARNOLD RETURNED TO HIS LUXURIOUS PRIVATE OFFICE. HE WAITED IMPATIENTLY FOR PIETRO'S SMOKE. AFTER A WHILE IT CAME. TWO THICK RAPS! ARNOLD BO HE ENTER.



YOU ... WANTED TO SEE MR. MR. EVERETTE?

YES, MR. PIETRO! COME IN! SIT DOWN!

THE WRINKLED OLD MAN SAT DOWN NERVOUSLY! ARNOLD STUDIED HIM...NOTED HIS TREMBLING BONEY HANDS...HIS GRIM SKULL-LIKE FACE...

I'VE INSTRUCTED THE CASHIER TO ISSUE YOU A CHECK FOR TWO WEEKS' PAY IN ADVANCE, MR. PIETRO! I'M SORRY... BUT I'M FORCED TO LET YOU GO...

BUT... WHY, SIRT? DID I DO SOME- THING WRONG?



NO, PIETRO! IT'S NOT *THAT*! IT'S JUST THAT YOU'RE *TOO OLD*! I WANT ONLY *FOURTY* MEN WORKING FOR EVERETTE AND SON!

BUT, MR. EVERETTE! I'VE BEEN HERE *TWENTY YEARS*! I WORKED FOR YOUR FATHER BEFORE YOU!



THAT DOESN'T MATTER NOW! MY FATHER IS DEAD! THERE IS NO ROOM FOR SENTIMENT IN BUSINESS! I WANT NO ONE TO OLD MEN WORKING FOR ME! THEY'RE SLOW... FIRE EASILY...

PLEASE! I HAVE NO PLACE TO GO... NO ONE TO TURN TO!

DON'T YOU HAVE A *FAMILY*, CARLO?

NO! THEY ARE ALL BACK IN *ITALY*! I LEFT THEM TWENTY-FIVE YEARS AGO TO COME TO WORK IN AMERICA!

WELL, WHY NOT GO BACK TO THEM? A MAN YOUR AGE SHOULD RETIRE ANYWAY!

PERHAPS YOU ARE RIGHT! I ONLY HOPE THAT WHEN YOU ARE OLD, YOU ARE NOT TREATED THIS WAY!



ARNOLD TURNED AWAY FROM THE WRETCHED OLD MAN AND BLANCED INTO THE MIRROR! EXCEPT FOR A FEW WHITE LINES ACROSS HIS FOREHEAD, HE SCARCELY LOOKED HIS THIRTY-FIVE YEARS...

DON'T WORRY, CARLO! I'LL MAKE SURE I'M NOT DEPENDENT ON ANYONE WHEN THAT TIME COMES!

SOME OF US ARE NOT AS FORTUNATE! YOU DO NOT HAVE TO FEAR OLD AGE!



NOT WITH *MY* DOUGH, CARLO! BUT... I'M A *SMALL* MAN! YOU CAN PICK UP YOUR CHECK ON THE WAY OUT! GOOD-BAY!

GOOD-BYE, MR. EVERETTE! PERHAPS YOUR LOVE OF YOUTH, AND *DIS- TASTE* FOR OLD AGE WILL CHANGE IN THE FUTURE! WE SHALL SEE!



CARLO PIETRO LEFT THE OFFICES OF EVERETTE AND SON AND NEVER RETURNED! ARNOLD HIRED A YOUNG MAN TO TAKE HIS PLACE, AND CARLO WAS SOON FORGOTTEN! BUT SEVERAL WEEKS LATER... IN NANTU... WHERE THE AGENT PIETRO HAD GONE...

WHAT DO YOU WANT WITH \$50,000, OLD MAN? WHY DO YOU COME TO ME?



I WANT SOMETHING FOR ONE WHO LOVES DEATH TOO MUCH TO TEACH HIM A LESSON!



THE GRATE STOOD ABOUT NEVER FEET HIGH! ARNOLD SCOWLED AT IT...

PIETRO, HELL! NIGHT AS WELL OPEN IT AND SEE WHAT IT IS!



JEEVES, THE BUTLER, PILED THE SIDES OF THE GRATE LOOSE AND THEY FELL AWAY, REVEALING...

WHY, IT'S A SMALL TREE. THERE'S A NOTE HANGING ON ONE OF ITS BRANCHES!



IT WAS ALMOST TWO MONTHS AFTER ARNOLD HAD FIRED CARLO PIETRO THAT THE GRATE ARRIVED! ARNOLD SURVEYED IT ON THE REAR TERRACE OF HIS PALATIAL ESTATE...

WHAT IN THE WORLD COULD IT BE, JEEVES? IS THERE A RETURN ADDRESS?

YES, SIR! IT COMES FROM NANTU... A CARLO PIETRO SENT IT!



IT SAYS: DEAR MR. EVERETTE, IN MY NATIVE LAND THIS TREE IS WORSHIPPED BY THE UNEDUCATED! THEY BELIEVE THAT IT CAN ward OFF OLD AGE! SHOWING HOW MUCH YOU DESPISE THAT INEVITABLE STATE, I SEND THIS VARIETY OF OAK TO YOU! PERHAPS IT WILL HELP!



WHAT SHALL WE DO WITH IT, SIR? HOW IS BLAZES SHOULD I KNOW PLANT IT, I SUSPECT IT'S AN INTERESTING TYPE OF TREE IN ANY CASE! YES! PLANT IT!



AND SO, WHILE ARNOLD EVERETTE WATCHED, HIS SERVANT DUG A HOLE NEAR THE GARDEN WALL AND PLANTED THE WEIRD CHARLED OAK-TREE...



THAT'S A GOOD SPOT FOR IT! I CAN'T SEE IT FROM THE HOUSE, SO I WON'T BE REMUNDED OF THE ONLY THING...

A WEEK WENT BY? THE BURDEN OF WORK THAT HAD SEEMED SO HEAVY ON ARNOLD SEEMED LIGHTER, SOMEBODY? ARNOLD MOVED ABOUT EASILY, AND BEGAN TO FEEL MORE ENERGETIC...

GOOD MORNING, MR. EVERETTE! YOU'RE LOOKING WELL THIS MORNING!

I FEEL WELL THIS MORNING, JEDDY!



ARNOLD FOUND A DESIRE TO PLAY GOLF AGAIN. SOMETHING HE HADN'T DONE FOR YEARS...

GOOD SHOT, EVERETTE! RIGHT ON THE GREEN!

LONG! I HAVEN'T PLAYED LIKE THIS SINCE I WAS THIRTY!



EVER HE VISITS TO NIGHT CLUBS AND THEATERS WITH OLD FLAMES BREV MORE FREQUENT...

WHY, ARNOLD, YOU DEAR? YOU DANCE DIVINELY! THIS BRINGS BACK OLD MEMORIES... DOESN'T IT?

NOT SO OLD, HELEN? REMEMBER? THINK YOUNG... FEEL YOUNG!



THEN, ONE MORNING ARNOLD STARED INTO THE MIRROR...

THAT'S FUNNY! I USED TO HAVE WRINKLES ON MY FOREHEAD AND UNDER MY EYES! NOW THEY'RE GONE!



IT WAS THAT VERY SAME MORNING THAT ARNOLD SAW THE TREE? HE'D DECIDED TO WALK TO THE STATION AND HAD NOTICED IT AS HE PASSED THE GARDEN WALL...

WHY, EVEN THE TREE ITSELF SEEMED HE LOOKS YOUNGER? DOESN'T SEEM AS CROOKED AND SHARPER ANYMORE? AND THE LEAVES LOOK GREENER!



ARNOLD SMILED AND WALKED ON PAST? LIFE CERTAINLY WAS BRIGHT AND CHEERFUL LATELY! PROBABLY BEING SURROUNDED WITH YOUNG MEN AT THE OFFICE DID IT? THEN... SOME DAYS LATER...

WHY? FACE DOESN'T LOOK BAD THIS MORNING! THINK I CAN SQUEEZE BY WITHOUT A SHAVE TODAY!



ARNOLD WAS WHISTLING A MERRY TUNE AS HE REARED THE GARDEN WALL. BUT THE TUNE GAVE TO A GUSH OF AIR THROUGH HIS LIPS AS HE SPIED THE TREE...

STRANGE! THE TREE SEEMS TO BE STRAIGHTENING UP! IT LOOKS... DIFFERENT! ALMOST... YOUNGER!



THE NEXT MORNING ARNOLD  
DIDN'T HAVE TO SHAVE AGAIN! ON  
THE FOLLOWING MORNING, FOR  
THAT MATTER...



ARNOLD DIDN'T GO TO THE OFFICE  
ONE DAY! HE'D MEANT TO, BUT A  
STRANGE DESIRE TOOK HOLD OF  
HIM! THE AFTERNOON FOUND HIM  
IN THE BLEACHERS ALONG WITH  
HUNDREDS OF TEEN-AGERS,  
CHEERING FOR THE HOME TEAM...



IN FACT, ARNOLD NEVER WENT TO  
THE OFFICE AGAIN! SOMEBODY  
HE'D SUDDENLY LOST INTEREST



EXCEPT FOR THE CURIOUS FACT THAT HIS BEARD  
HAD STOPPED GROWING AND HIS WHISKERS HAD  
VANISHED, ARNOLD HAD NOT NOTICED THE HORRIBLE  
CHANGE THAT WAS TAKING PLACE! IT WASN'T UNTIL  
HIS TAILOR EXPLODED THAT HE REALIZED SOMETHING  
WAS WRONG...



AND WHEN JEEVES ANNOUNCED THAT HE WAS LEAV-  
ING... TERROR CREEPT INTO ARNOLD'S HEART...



ARNOLD LOCKED HIMSELF IN AFTER JEEVES LEFT! HE  
WAS FORCED TO SEARCH THROUGH OLD THINGS IN THE  
ATTIC FOR CLOTHES LONG SINCE PACKED AWAY TO  
WEAR! CHILD'S CLOTHES...



ONE DAY, AS ARNOLD SCAMPERED ABOUT THE GAR-  
DEN, HIS HOOP ROLLED OVER TO THE WALL! IT  
STOPPED BEFORE A YOUNG, SLEEKLY SHAPED TREE  
A SAILING...



IT WAS THE GNARLED OLD CROOKED TREE THAT CARLO PIETRO HAD SENT<sup>1</sup> NOW, IT STOOD FIRM AND STRAIGHT... REACHING TOWARD THE SUNLIGHT<sup>2</sup> ARNOLD STUDIED IT FOR A MOMENT, SCRATCHED HIS MOP OF UNCOMB HAIR... THEN SKIPPED AWAY...

OH, WELL<sup>3</sup> ANOTHER TIME<sup>4</sup> NOW I'VE GOT TO GO PLAY WITH MY SOLDIERS<sup>5</sup>



THE NEXT MORNING, ARNOLD TUMBLED OUT OF BED ONTO THE FLOOR<sup>1</sup> HE TRIED TO GET UP<sup>2</sup> SOMETHING WAS WRONG<sup>3</sup> HIS SHORT STUBBY LEGS WOULDN'T RESPOND<sup>4</sup> HE CRAWLED ALL THAT DAY...

MM...BROOKS<sup>1</sup> WHERE ARE MA BROOKS<sup>2</sup> OH? HERE THEY ARE<sup>3</sup> COVER HERE...



NEAR THE GARDEN WALL, THE INFANT THAT ARNOLD HAD BECOME CRAWLED AFTER AN INTERESTING LITTLE INSECT<sup>1</sup> HE STOPPED BEFORE A YOUNG GREEN SAGO, SPRINGING FROM THE SOFT RICH EARTH...

PRETTY FLOWER<sup>1</sup> SEE PRETTY FLOWER<sup>2</sup>



THAT NIGHT THE DESERTED HOUSE OF ARNOLD EVERETTE WAS FILLED WITH THE SQUALLING HOWLS OF A HUNGRY BABY...CRYING FOR ITS BOTTLE...

A-WAH... A-WAH... A-WAH... HIC... A-WAH...



TOWARD MORNING, THE SCREAMS HAD CHANGED TO THE FAINT BURLLES AND CRIES OF A NEW-BORN BABE...



AND SOON AS EVER THOSE CRIES DIED AWAY<sup>1</sup> AS THE MORNING SUN STREAMED OVER THE GARDEN WALL... A BOLDEN RAY SHOT DOWNWARD TOWARD THE SPOT WHERE ARNOLD EVERETTE...SEVERAL MONTHS BEFORE...HAD PLANTED CARLO PIETRO'S GNARLED AND CROOKED TREE<sup>2</sup> THEN, ON A BARE SPOT OF BLACK EARTH, LAY A SINGLE OBJECT...AN **ACORN**<sup>3</sup>



HEH, HEH<sup>1</sup> WELL, DIDDY<sup>2</sup> I HOPE YOU **SEED ON POINT** OF THIS WHOLE LITTLE TALE<sup>3</sup> WHICH IS **FORGET** SHOWING OLD OR GROWING **FOUNT**<sup>4</sup> ARNOLD CAN'T HELP YOU! HE'S JUST A **BEAN**...OF SUNLIGHT...NOW DON'T FORGET TO READ MY COLUMN, **THE DRIFT-KEEPER'S CORNER**, FOR BACK

ISSUES. INFO<sup>1</sup> NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THAT **HAG**. **THE OLD WITCH**<sup>2</sup> SHE! DON'T FORGET! OUT OF THE MOUTHS OF BABES...HEH, HEH<sup>3</sup>



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! YEP, IT'S ME... *THE OLD WITCH*... MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! THIS TIME, FOR THE OFFERING FROM MY CAULDRON, I'VE DRESSED UP A TALE TOLD TO ME BY LARRY DOUGLAS, A THEATRICAL MAN! IT'S IN HIS OWN WORDS, AND HE CALLS IT...

## "The Ventriloquist's Dummy!"



IT HAD BEEN YEARS SINCE I'D SEEN CHARLES JEROME! AS I STUDIED HIS PALE, DRAWN FACE I WAS SHOCKED TO SEE HOW MUCH HE'D CHANGED! HIS WARM SMILE HAD DISAPPEARED... IN ITS PLACE WAS A TIGHT GRIMACE! HIS EYES THAT ONCE SPARKLED HAPPILY WERE SAD AND BLOODSHOT, ENCIRCLED BY TIRED LINES.

CHARLES! YOU OLD SON-OF-A-GUN! HOW ARE YOU? I'VE BEEN LOOKING HIGH AND LOW FOR YOU!

LARRY! LARRY DOUGLAS! COME IN! COME IN!





CHARLES STEPPED BACK AND I ENTERED HIS HOTEL ROOM. I LOOKED AROUND. THE PLACE WAS BARE EXCEPT FOR AN IRON BED AND A BROKEN CHEST OF DRAWERS. I COULDN'T BELIEVE MY EYES...

HOW DID YOU FIND ME, LARRY?

YOUR OLD AGENT TOLD ME WHERE YOU WERE LIVING. I... I DON'T KNOW THOSE WERE SO BAD WITH YOU, CHARLES!



CHARLES MOOSED. I LOOKED AT HIS HAND. HIS LEFT HAND. THE HAND HE'D USED TO MANIPULATE HIS DUMMIES...

RETIRED? YES? YOU CAN CALL IT THAT!

IF YOU'RE RETIRED, WHY DO YOU STILL KEEP YOUR HAND SLEAVED?



CHARLES ALWAYS KEPT HIS 'DUMMY-HAND' ENCASED IN A BEASTY WOOLLEN MITTEN. I REMEMBERED NOW I'D RUBBED HIM ABOUT IT...

JUST FORCE OF HABIT I GUESS!

TELL ME, CHARLES, DO YOU STILL HAVE MORTY, YOUR DUMMY?



CHARLES STARED AT ME FOR A MOMENT. THEN HIS BLANCE SHOT ACROSS THE ROOM TO A BATTERED SUITCASE IN THE CORNER...

OH! YES. I SEE! I THOUGHT SO! NOW HERE, THE...

DON'T TOUCH THAT SUITCASE!



I STOPPED IN MY TRACKS. CHARLES'S VOICE HAD A WILD PRINTERED RING IN IT.

COURSE NOT, CHARLES. IF YOU'D RATHER I WOULDNT NOW LET'S GET DOWN TO BUSINESS. I'VE COME TO OFFER YOU A JOB!



A JOB? BUT, I TOLD YOU! I'M NOT WORKING ANYMORE!

LOOK, CHARLES. I'M THE ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR FOR A NEW RESORT HOTEL IN THE MOUNTAINS. THIS CAN MEAN A LOT TO YOU. IT CAN PUT YOU BACK ON TOP IF THEY LIKE YOU. WHAT DO YOU SAY? I HAVE A SPOT FOR YOU NEXT WEEKEND!

NO! I WON'T DO IT! I'M THROUGH PERFORMING THROUGH!



AS I DROVE BACK UPSTATE, I KEPT THINKING OF CHARLES JEROME! HE'D FALLEN A LONG WAY! I REMEMBERED BACK TO THOSE YEARS WHEN HE'D THRILLED AUDIENCES... HAD THEM HOLLERING IN THE AISLES...



YOU WERE GREAT TONIGHT CHARLES!

YOU MEAN **WORTHY** HERE WAS GREAT, LARRY?

IT'S BEEN CHARLES'S AGENT BACK IN THOSE YEARS! WHEN I'D NOTTEN AN OFFER OUT IN HOLLYWOOD, I'D SOLD HIS ACCOUNT! THAT WAS THE LAST I'D HEAR OF HIM, ALTHOUGH I'D FOLLOWED HIS DAREM IN THE **THEATRE PAPERS**...

HMM! WHAT'S THAT CHARLES JEROME LEAVES SHOW AFTER MYSTERIOUS DEATH OF DANCER ON SAME BILL?



I'D BOOKED THE ACTS I'D NEEDED AND THEN LOOKED UP CHARLES! NOW I WAS DRIVING BACK TO THE HOTEL, THE SPOT STILL OPEN FOR THE NEXT WEEKEND...

WATER HE'LL CHANGE HIS MIND! I'LL GIVE HIM A LITTLE TIME TO THINK IT OVER!



CHARLES'S ALWAYS REFERRED TO WORTH AS THOUGH IT WERE A REAL PERSON! CERTAINLY THE DUNNY BEHAVED THAT WAY! IT WAS THE INCREDIBLE WAY CHARLES USED TO MANIPULATE IT! AND, ALTHOUGH I USED TO THINK IT WAS JUST A PUBLICITY STUNT, CHARLES'S BOARDED THE MANIPULATING HAND WELL.



WHY DO YOU ALWAYS WEAR THAT **HEAVY WOOLLEN HITTER**, CHARLES?

MY **HARD** IS MY FORTUNE! I'VE GOT TO PROTECT IT!

IT'D BEEN AFTER THAT UNEXPLAINED DEATH THAT CHARLES HAD BEGUN HIS DOWNWARD SLIDE! THE GIRL HAD BEEN ATTACKED, IT SEEMED, BY A HOARD OF **RATS**...

NOTHING ELSE COULD HAVE RIPPED HER UP LIKE THAT EXCEPT SMALL SHARP-TOOTHED ANIMALS, SUCH AS... **RATS!**



I'D HEARD LITTLE ABOUT HIM AFTER THAT! THEN, WHEN I'D TAKEN THE JOB AS ENTERTAINMENT DIRECTOR FOR THE WHITE LANE HOTEL...

WE WANT TOP-NOTCH, OUT-OF-THE-ORDINARY TALENT, LARRY!

I THINK I KNOW **ONE** ACT YOU'LL LIKE!



I WAS SO BUSY THE NEXT FEW DAYS PLANNING THE MID-WEEK SHOWS THAT I COMPLETELY FORGOT ABOUT CHARLES JEROME! THEN ON FRIDAY MORNING, I LOOKED UP FROM MY DESK TO SEE...

CHARLES! YOU DID COME! I'M SO HAPPY!

I HOPE THE SPOT IS STILL OPEN, LARRY!



THERE WAS A STRANGE LOOK IN CHARLES'S EYES AS HE STOOD BEFORE MY DESK. HE SEEMED TO BE STARRING RIGHT THROUGH ME.

OF COURSE, CHARLES! THE SPOT IS FINE! I'LL ARRANGE FOR YOUR ROOM!

THAT'S GOOD OF YOU, LARRY!



CHARLES'S WITHERED HAND RANG AT HIS SIDE. IN HIS OTHER HAND HE CLUTCHED THE SUITCASE CONTAINING MORTY... HIS DUMMY.

WHAT MADE YOU CHANGE YOUR MIND, CHARLES?

WHY...I JUST DECIDED TO COME OUT OF RETIREMENT. THAT'S ALL!



A BELL-HOP BROCKED AND ENTERED.

TAKE MR. JEROME TO THE ENTER-TAINER'S COTTAGE, JOE! SINE HAS A NICE ROOM!

YES, SIR! NIGHT THIS MR. SIR!



I WATCHED OUT OF MY OFFICE WINDOW IN THE RECREATION HALL AS CHARLES MOVED DOWN THE WALKWAY WITH HIS SUITCASE, FOLLOWING THE BELL-HOP. HIS FEET SEEMED TO DRAG...AND HE STAGGERED A LITTLE...

POOR FELLOW! PROBABLY TOOK A FEW SHOTS OF WHISKY TO BOLSTER HIMSELF. AH, HE'LL BE ALL RIGHT. JUST AS SOON AS THE CURTAIN OPENS!



THAT NIGHT, SINCE IT WAS A WEEKEND, THE RECREATION HALL WAS JAMMED! THE SHOW MOVED ALONG SMOOTHLY! THEN IT CAME TIME FOR CHARLES'S ACT! I SAW HIM STANDING IN THE WINGS HOLDING MORTY... HIS FAMILIAR DUMMY...AS THE ANNOUNCER INTRODUCED HIM...

AND NOW...FOR HIS FIRST PERFORMANCE ANYWHERE AFTER TEN YEARS OF RETIREMENT...THE WORLD FAMOUS VENTRILOQUIST...MISTER CHARLES JEROME...AND MORTY!



CHARLES CAME OUT ON THE STAGE WITH MORTY BEATED IN THE CROOK OF HIS RIGHT ARM! THERE WAS SOME SCATTERED APPLAUSE FROM THOSE WHO REMEMBERED THE GREAT MAN IN HIS PRIME! MORTY BEGAN TO EYE THE AUDIENCE, LOOKING FROM FACE TO FACE...

WENT HE CUTE?

HE LOOKS SO REAL!

LIKE A LIVE BOY!



SUDDENLY MORTY STOPPED! HIS GLANCE HAD FALLEN UPON A RATHER ATTRACTIVE YOUNG WOMAN SEATED NEAR BY! HE WHISPERED SLILY...AND QUINNED...

I'LL SEE YOU TOMORROW, MORTY...AFTER THE SHOW!



IT WAS THE PERFECT THING TO SAY! THE AUDIENCE HOWLED! YOU KNOW THE CROWD THAT FREQUENTS A RESORT LIKE THAT: WOMEN ON VACATIONS LOOKING FOR RICH HUSBANDS MEN HUNTING FOR WEALTHY WIVES! IT ALWAYS ENDS UP LIKE A RAT-RACE, WITH EVERYONE LYING TO EVERYONE ELSE! ANYWAY...THEY LOVED CHARLES AND HIS DUMBY.

SO MR JEROME? YOU ENJOY A BETTER WAY TO STUDY ASTRONOMY?

HAB, HAB, HAB!

THEY'RE A SCREAM!

AFTER THE SHOW, I WENT BACKSTAGE TO CONGRATULATE CHARLES ON HIS WONDERFUL PERFORMANCE! HE'D OUTDONE HIMSELF! HE'D MANIPULATED MORTY BETTER THAN EVER BEFORE...

MR JEROME? WHY, HE LEFT THE HALL AS SOON AS HE CAME OFF-STAGE?

OH! HE MUST HAVE GONE ON BACK TO THE ENTERTAINERS' COTTAGE!

I MOVED DOWN THE WALK TO THE COTTAGE! BACK AT THE HALL, THE GUESTS WERE POURING OUT OF THE EXITS THEIR LAUGHTER DRIFTING ACROSS THE NIGHT AIR TOWARD ME! I COULD HEAR CHARLES'S NAME REFERRED TO IN THE GABBLE OF CONVERSATION.

THEY LIED HIM!

THE COTTAGE DOOR SLAMMED BEHIND ME AND SILENCE CLOSED IN AS I STOOD IN THE SEMI-DARKNESS! I SAZED DOWN THE CORRIDOR AT THE SIX DOORS...

NOW, WHICH ONE IS CHARLES'S?

SUDDENLY, THE SLOOD FROZE IN MY VEINS! VOICES EXPLODED FROM BEHIND ONE OF THE DOORS! LOUD VOICES HEARD WITH ANGER! CHARLES, USING HIS NORMAL VOICE, WAS ARGUING WITH HIMSELF! USING MORTY'S VOICE...

NO! I HEARD! YES YOU WILL! I'M NOT GOING TO LET YOU! MAKE YOU! YOU'RE TOO WEAK TO STOP ME!

I STOOD OUTSIDE THE DOOR FOR A MOMENT LISTENING TO THE BAYING.

GOOD LORD! HE'S OUT OF HIS MIND! HE'S FIGHTING WITH THAT DUMBY OF HIS OVER THE GIRL IN THE AUDIENCE!

I SHOOKED! THE TELLING STOPPED ABRUPTLY! I HEARD A SHORT WHIMPER AND THEN CHARLES OPENED THE DOOR! HIS EYES WERE RED AS THOUGH HE'D BEEN CRYING.

I...I WANTED TO CONGRATULATE YOU, CHARLES! THE AUDIENCE LOVED YOU!

TH...THANK YOU, LARRY! I...I'M TIRED! I MUST GO TO BED NOW... SO I WON'T INVITE YOU IN!

CHARLES CLOSED THE DOOR, AND I STOOD THERE FEELING FOOLISH! I SHRUGGED AND RETURNED TO THE 'RED' HALL! THERE WAS SOME WORK I HAD TO DO BEFORE I COULD GO TO BED! LATER AS I SAT AT MY DESK...

WHAT WAS THAT?

SCREEEEEEEEHHHHH!



IT WAS THE SAME WOMAN THAT CHARLES'D HAD MOSTLY DIED TO! I THOUGHT OF THE DANGER THAT HAD DIED THE SAME WAY TEN YEARS BEFORE! I RUSHED TO THE COTTAGE AND FLUNG OPEN CHARLES'S DOOR...

CHARLES! HE HE'S DEAD!



THE SUITCASE CONTAINING CHARLES'S DUMMY SAT ON THE FLOOR IN THE CORNER! I MOVED TOWARD IT! I HAD TO SEE! I THREW BACK THE LID...

WHAT THE...? THE DUMMY HAD NO HEAD!



I STARED DOWN AT THE HEADLESS VENTRILOQUIST'S DUMMY! I COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT! THEN I SAW OTHER THINGS IN THE SUITCASE...

MAKE-UP! THE SUITCASE HAD MAKE-UP IN IT!



A SHOUT FROM THE HOTEL KITCHEN DREW MY ATTENTION! I RUSHED ACROSS THE GRASS AND ONTO THE PORCH! THE CHEF STOOD WIDE-EYED, YAWNING HIS ARMS...

WHAT HAPPENED?

HE TAKE MY CLEAVER! HE STEAL MY CLEAVER! THAT VENTRILOQUIST!



I LOOKED AROUND! A BUTTER LAY ON THE FLOOR BY MY FEET! I PICKED IT UP! IT WAS COVERED WITH BLOOD! SUDDENLY I HEARD CHARLES'S VOICE COMING FROM BEHIND SOME BUSHES...

CHARLES!

I'M GOING TO GET RID OF YOU, ONCE AND FOR ALL, YOU...HYDRAINE FREAK! YOU LITTLE BEAST!



AS I RUSHED TOWARD THE BUSHES, I HEARD MORTY'S VOICE... SHOUTING, SCREAMING! THEN A CRAWLING SENSATION STARTED UP MY SPINE! THE VOICES OVERLAPPED! THERE WERE TWO HANDS...

NOT DON'T, CHARLES! DON'T!

IT'S NO USE! I'M FREEZING MYSELF FOR GOOD!

AS I BURST AROUND THE BUSH, I CAUGHT SIGHT OF A GLEAM OF STEEL IN THE BLACKNESS! CHARLES STOOD OVER A TREE STUMP, HIS LEFT FOREARM PRESSED ON ITS FLAT TOP! AND HE WAS BRANDING THE CLEAVER DOWN UPON IT...

NO! NO! EEEEEE!

MORTY'S SCREAM WAS CUT SHORT AS THE CLEAVER FELL! A NAUSEATING FRAMED HEAD... SHRIVELED AND UGLY... ROLLED TO MY FEET...

I'M RID OF YOU! RID OF YOU!

OH, MY GOD!

CHARLES PITCHED FORWARD AND FELL! HIS LEFT HAND HAD BEEN SEVERED AT THE WRIST! NOW I KNOW WHY HE'D ALWAYS WORN THE GLOVES! INSTEAD OF A LEFT HAND, A HORRIBLE HEAD HAD GROWN FROM HIS WRIST...

I... I HAD TO DO IT, LARRY! TEN YEARS AGO HE FILLED THAT DANGER! HE TOOK OVER MY BODY AND KILLED HER!

YOU'RE BLEEDING, CHARLES! I'VE GOT TO GET YOU A DOCTOR!

WHEN I WAS A CHILD, THEY SAID I HAD A DEFORMED HAND! BUT AS I GROW UP THAT HORRIBLE HEAD DEVELOPED! SOON IT OPENED ITS WICKED EYES AND BEGAN TO TALK! I BECAME A VENTRILOQUIST... USED IT AS A PUPPET!

THAT EXPLAINS THE REALISTIC MOVEMENTS! MORTY (MORTY) HAD!

THEN IT BEGAN TO WHIST CONTROL OF MY BODY WHILE I SLEPT! I HAD TO RETIRE FROM SHOW BUSINESS! I KEPT THE HEAD SHIVERING! BUT YOU CAME... AND OFFERED ME WORK! TOMORROW, IT TOOK OVER AGAIN! I COULDN'T STOP IT!

I... I...

I'LL GO FOR THE DOCTOR, CHARLES! I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

I TIES A CRUDE TOWNLIGHT ON CHARLES'S WRIST AND RUSHED OFF! WHEN I GOT BACK, CHARLES WAS DEAD! HE'D BEEN FORN TO JARRED! THE SEVERED HEAD LAY NEARBY...

THE HEAD WASN'T QUITE DEAD! WITH ITS LAST THREAD OF LIFE, IT ATTACKED CHARLES! THEY'VE DESTROYED EACH OTHER!

HEL, HEL! WELL, THAT'S THE TALK LARRY PALMED OFF ON ME! SO I JUST NAMED IT DOWN TO YOU! I HOPE YOU LIKED IT! NEXT TIME YOU SEE A VENTRILOQUIST, LOOK CAREFULLY TO SEE HOW HE HOLDS HIS DUMMY! IF HE'S READING IN TOO FAR, BEWARE! WELL, WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE HAPPIEST OF HORROR! DON'T FORGET TO READ THE GIFT

KEEPER'S CORNER FOR BACK ISSUE 'N' SUBSCRIPTION INFO! SEE, NOW!

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OWN SUBSCRIPTIONS TO ALL  
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GLAD VAULT #3



GLAD VAULT #4



GLAD VAULT #5



GLAD VAULT #6



GLAD WEIRD #1



GLAD WEIRD #2



GLAD WEIRD #3



GLAD WEIRD #4



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WEIRD #5



WEIRD #6



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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! ANOTHER FEW MONTHS... ANOTHER \$2.00... AND ANOTHER TALES FROM THE CRYPT, ENLIGHTENED! ALSO TO SEE YOU! COME MY COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! THIS IS YOUR HOST, THE CRYPT. KEEPER, SPOOKS! I'VE CHOSEN A REAL MEATY TALE OF TERROR FROM MY COLLECTION TO START OFF MY BOOK! IT'S A FAVORITE OF MINE. ONE THAT I'M SURE WILL MAKE YOUR BLOOD FREEZE IN YOUR VEINS AND THE HAIR ON THE BACK OF YOUR NECK CRAWL! I CALL THIS SHIVERY FARM...

## GROUNDS...FOR HORROR!



ARTIE'S STEP-FATHER SLAMMED THE CLOSET DOOR AND TURNED THE KEY FROM WITHIN. CAME THE MUFFLED BARS OF THE BOY'S PITFUL CRYING...

AND YOU'LL STAY IN THERE, YOUNG MAN! UNTIL I DECIDE TO LET YOU OUT!

I-I PLEASE, DAD! DON'T LOCK ME IN AGAIN! I'LL BE GOOD! SOB! SOB! PLEASE! I PROMISE...



BEHIND ARTIE'S ANGRY STEP-FATHER STOOD A FINAL-LOOKING, SAD-FACED WOMAN! SHE SHOOK HER HEAD, HER EYES FILLED WITH TEARS...

YOU... YOU *SHOULDN'T*, SAM! YOU *SHOULDN'T* LOOK HIM *IN* THERE EVERY TIME HE'S *SAD*! IT *FRIGHTENS* HIM! IT ISN'T RIGHT!

WIND YOUR OWN BUSINESS! I KNOW WHAT I'M *DOING*!



SAMUEL SHICKER TURNED AND STAMPED OUT OF THE TINY APARTMENT, THROUGH A CURTAINED DOORWAY, INTO THE BUTCHER SHOP IN THE FRONT...

HE'S *NOT* TO LEARN TO OBEY! THE SHAT IS *SPOILED*! HE NEEDS TO BE *DISCIPLINED*!

BUT LOOKING HIM IN A DARK CLOSET IS TOO *HARSH*!



SAM MEYER HEARD HIS WIFE'S OBJECTION! HE SWUNG OPEN THE HUGE MEAT-REFRIGERATOR DOOR AND STEPPED INSIDE! IN THE APARTMENT BEHIND THE STORE, LILY SHICKER STARED AT THE LOCKED CLOSET DOOR, LISTENING TO HER SON'S QUIET WHIMPERING...

POOR NATIE! AND HE'S *SO* SCARED OF THE DARK!

SOS... SOS...



THEN ARTIE'S CRYING STOPPED! SILENCE CLOSED IN AROUND LILY! THE ONLY SOUND WAS THE HUM OF THE ELECTRIC MEAT-SHINDING MACHINE IN THE SHOP, AS SAM PREPARED AN ORDER OF CHOPPED-MEAT! SUDDENLY, ARTIE *SMILED*...

TEE-HEE, EE-A-E!

HE...HE'S *LAUGHING*! THE *LITTLE SCOUNDREL*! HE'S *NOT* AFRAID AT ALL!



LILY SHRUGGED AND RETURNED TO HER HOUSE-WORK! FROM TIME TO TIME SHE WOULD STOP AND LISTEN! FROM THE CLOSET, SHE COULD HEAR ARTIE'S MUFFLED WHISPERS AND AN OCCASIONAL CHUCKLE...

*LISTEN* TO HIM! HE'S *TALKING* TO HIMSELF! HE'S *PLAYING* IN THERE!



AFTER A WHILE, ARTIE'S STEP-FATHER CAME IN FROM THE SHOP AND UNLOCKED THE DOOR! AS THE LIGHT STREAMED INTO THE CLOSET, CHASING THE DARKNESS BEHIND THE HANGING COATS AND FLEED SORES, ARTIE BLINKED UP! HE SAT IN THE CORNER ON THE FLOOR...*SMILING*...

ALL NIGHT! SET UP! SET OUT! I HAVE AN ORDER FOR YOU TO *DELIVER*!

YES, DADDY!



SAM SHICKER TURNED AND STARTED TOWARD THE FRONT! AT THE CURTAINED DOORWAY, HE LOOKED BACK! ARTIE WAS STANDING OUTSIDE THE CLOSET, WAVING HIS CHUBBY LITTLE HAND AND WHISPERING INTO THE CLUTTERED ENCLOSURE...

BYE! I HOPE I SEE YOU *AGAIN*!

ARTIE!



ARTIE MOVED TOWARD HIS STEP-FATHER, HIS CURLY LITTLE EIGHT-YEAR OLD HEAD BOWED. SAM BRIDGER BLARED DOWN AT HIM...

WHO IN BLAZES WERE YOU TALKING TO, JUST THERE?

IF NO ONE, DADDY! I WAS JUST PLAYIN'!



WELL, CUT IT OUT! HERE! TAKE THIS ORDER OVER TO MRS. SAFFERTY, AND DON'T STOP TO TALK TO THE OTHER BRAT'S ON THE WAY!

YES, DADDY!



ARTIE CURLED HIS ARM AROUND THE SPONY SOFT BAG OF MEAT, AND SKIPPED OUT THE DOOR. HIS STEP-FATHER SHOULDED AFTER HIM.

YOU'VE GOT TO CLEAR THE CHOPPING BLOCK WHEN YOU GET BACK, SO HURRY UP!

YES, DADDY!



ON HIS WAY BACK FROM DELIVERING MRS. SAFFERTY'S MEAT ORDER, ARTIE WAS STOPPED BY A FEW OF THE NEIGHBORHOOD KIDS...

HI, ARTIE! WE GOT A BUNCH OF MORE-OR-LESS COOKED UP!

SEE, FELLERS, I CAN'T. I GOTTA CLEAN THE CHOPPING BLOCK!

HA, 'CHOP ARTIE! JUST FOR A LIL' WHILE!



IT WAS GETTING DARK WHEN ARTIE RETURNED TO THE BUTCHER SHOP. AS HE SHEEPISHLY ENTERED THE DOOR, HIS STEP-FATHER EXPLODED...

WHERE WERE YOU? YOU'VE BEEN GONE FOR OVER AN HOUR! YOU STOPPED TO PLAY, DIDN'T YOU? DIDN'T YOU?

YES, DADDY! THE KIDS ASKED...



SAM BRIDGER FLUNG THE WIRE-BRUSH AT HIS STEP-SON...

I TOLD YOU NOT TO STOP ON THE WAY! DIDN'T I? HERE! GET TO WORK! SCRUB THAT CHOPPING BLOCK SPOTLESS, HEAR ME? AFTER YOU'RE THROUGH, I'LL DEAL WITH YOU!

YES, DADDY! SORRY, PUT ME IN THE CLOSET AGAIN, DADDY!



THAT'S EXACTLY WHAT I'M GOING TO DO! YOU'LL LEARN TO BE OBEDIENT FET, YOUNG MAN!

YES, DADDY!



YOU KNOW WHAT A BUTCHER'S CHOPPING BLOCK IS, DON'T YOU? IT'S THAT LITTLE TABLE ABOUT THREE FEET SQUARE AND A FOOT OR SO THICK THAT THEY CROP THE MEAT ON! AFTER A BUST DAY, IT'S PRETTY WEIRD! THE WAY THEY CLEAN IT IS TO SCRAPER THE BLOOD STAINS AND IMBEDDED MEAT WITH A WIRE BRUSH UNTIL ALL TRACES ARE GONE! IT'S A TOUGH JOB FOR A MAN, LET ALONE AN EIGHT-YEAR OLD!



AFTER AN HOUR OR MORE, ARTIE FINALLY FINISHED THE BACK-BREAKING TASK OF SCRUBBING THE BLOCK, AND ENTERED THE APARTMENT BREATHELESS.

I'M FINISHED, DADDY! ARE YOU GOING TO PUT ME IN THE CLOSET, NOW?

THAT'S RIGHT! AND WITHOUT SUPPER, TOO!



GRAY, DADDY! SAM! YOU KEEP OUT OF THIS, MAMMA!



ARTIE OPENED THE CLOSET AND STEPPED IN! HE SAT DOWN UNTIL HE WAS CROSSED-LEGGED ON THE CLUTTERED FLOOR! HE SMILED UP AT HIS STEP-FATHER.

I'M READY, DADDY!

NEXT TIME YOU'LL LISTEN TO ME WHEN I TELL YOU SOMETHING!

SAM! PLEASE! HE'S A BROWNE BOY! HE NEEDS HIS MEALS!



MR BRICKER BLAMMED THE DOOR! THERE WAS NO SOUND IN THE DIRTY APARTMENT BEHIND THE BUTCHER SHOP! HE TURNED THE KEY! STILL NO SOUND! ARTIE'S MOTHER GASPED.

HE... HE DIDN'T CRY! HE... HE SEEMED TO WANT TO BE LOCKED IN!

THE KID'S CRAZY!



YET LISTENED FOR A MOMENT! ARTIE WAS WHISPERING TO HIMSELF BEHIND THE LOCKED DOOR! THEN HE SMILED...

SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE, SAM BRICKER! SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE? LISTEN TO HIM! HE TALKS TO HIMSELF! HE LAUGHS IN THERE! SEE WHAT YOU'VE DONE WITH THIS... PUNISHMENT?

SAM! HE'S PUTTING ON AN ACT! HE'S TRYING TO RID US! HE'S SCARED STIFF!



SAM STARED OUT THROUGH THE CURTAINED DOORWAY...

I'M GOING OVER TO EDE'S TO PLAT CARDS! YOU CAN LET 'IM OUT AFTER A WHILE! BUT REMEMBER WHAT I SAID! NO SUPPER!

YES, SAM!





LILY LISTENED FOR THE TINKLE OF THE BELL AS EAM WENT OUT THROUGH THE BUTCHER SHOP! THEN SHE TURNED TO THE CLOSET! BRACE, ARTIE WAS STILL CHATTERING AWAY IN LOW TONES! LILY TRIED TO MAKE OUT WHAT HE WAS EATING...

SEE, NO! NOT THAT! UH, UM! SEE! HE ISN'T... THAT BAD! HUNT! OH, THAT'S BE GRAY I GUESS!

ARTHUR?

ARTIE GASPED! THEN HE NICHED HIS IMAGINARY PLAYMATE! HIS MOTHER UNLOCKED THE CLOSET DOOR AND SWUNG IT OPEN! ARTIE SAT CROSS-LEGGED ON THE FLOOR SHINING UP AT HER SMILE.

YES, MOTHER!

YOU, YOU MUST BE HUNGRY, DEAR! COME OUT! I'LL GIVE YOU SOMETHING TO EAT!

ARTIE PEERED OUT OF THE CLOSET, ABOUT THE TIME APARTMENT...

IS HE DADDY? NO! HE'S SOME! BUT YOU'RE NOT TO TELL HIM I FED YOU... UNDERSTAND?

NO! HE'S SOME! BUT YOU'RE NOT TO TELL HIM I FED YOU... UNDERSTAND?

LILY PLACED THE GLASS OF MILK AND JAM-COVERED BREAD BEFORE HER SMALL SON! SHE SAT DOWN OPPOSITE HIM... STUDYING HIS FACE AS HE SIPPED HIS FOOD.

ARTIE! WHO DO YOU TALK TO IN THE CLOSET?

HUH? OH? YOU HEARD?

YES! WHO IS IT? SOMEONE YOU MADE UP?

UH, UM! NOPE! HE'S REAL! HE LIVES THERE IN THE CLOSET!

REAL? NOW, ARTIE! WHY HE JUST IN YOUR IMAGINATION?

UH, UM! NOPE! HE WANTS TO PUNISH DADDY FOR PUNISHING ME! HOORAY LIKE ME!

WHAT'S HIS NAME?

HOORAY! HE WANTED TO DO SOMETHING TERRIBLE TO DADDY! I WOULDN'T LET HIM!

ARTIE! MY BABY!

BUT I SAID IT'S GRAY IF HE PUSHES DADDY SO'S HE FALLS DOWN AN HURTS HIMSELF A LITTLE! THAT'S DEAR, ISN'T IT, MOMMY?

LILY STARED AT HER SON...HER EYES FILLING WITH TEARS! POOR ARTIE! SAM HAS HURT HIM BY LOCKING HIM IN THE CLOSET! MUST HE BEADLY! SUDDENLY, THE TINKLE OF THE STONE BELL STARTLED HER! SHE JUMPED UP.



SAM BECKER STRODE ACROSS THE BANQUET-COVERED BUTCHER SHOP FLOOR! AS HE CAME THROUGH THE CUNTAINED DOORWAY...



SUDDENLY, SAM SPRAWLED FORWARD, SLIDING ON HIS FACE...



ARTIE'S STEP-FATHER GOT TO HIS KNEES CURSING...



LILY STARED IN HORROR AT THE MISCHIEVOUS LOOK ON HER YOUNG SON'S FACE.



ARTIE GRINNED! SAM CAUGHT HIS STEP-SON'S EXPRESSION...



ARTIE'S STEP-FATHER DRESSED HIS SON BY HIS SHIRT COLLAR AND SHOVED HIM INTO THE CLOSET...



SAM SPUR AROUND, GLARING AT HIS WIFE...

YOU SHUT UP!  
I'LL HANDLE  
THIS MYSELF!

PLEASE, SAM!  
YOU DON'T  
KNOW WHAT  
YOU'RE  
DOING!



SAM STRODE INTO THE SHOP AND  
FLUNG OPEN THE MEAT-REFRIG-  
ERATOR DOOR...

YOU LEAVE HIM IN  
THERE, LILY! I'M GOING  
TO SLICE UP A SLICE  
OF BEEF FOR  
TOMORROW...

YES,  
SAM!



LILY LISTENED FOR THE WHIR OF  
THE SLICING MACHINE! FINALLY IT  
STARTED! SHE EDGED TOWARD THE  
CLOSET... LISTENING...

OH-UN-HOPE! NOT  
THAT! THAT'S TOO  
FEROUS! HUH?  
MY FINGER! OHAY!

ARTIE!  
SASPI!



SUDDENLY THE BUTCHER SHOP BEYOND THE CUR-  
TAINED DOOR WAS FILLED WITH A BLOOD-  
CURDLING SCREAM...



LILY DARTED ACROSS THE APARTMENT, THROUGH  
THE SHOP, AND INTO THE REFRIGERATOR! SAM STOOD  
HOWLING BEFORE THE WHIRRING SLIDING MACHINE...  
A HANDKERCHIEF DUTCHED AROUND ONE HAND...



IT WAS DIFFICULT FOR SAM BRICKER TO DO HIS  
WORK IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED! LOPPING OFF  
THE LAST JOINT OF A FINGER CAN BE QUITE PAINFUL!  
OF COURSE, HE WAS CRANKIER THAN EVER...



IT WAS ABOUT A WEEK LATER THAT IT HAPPENED!  
SAM HAD SENT LILY OFF TO A MOVIE THAT NIGHT!  
HE'D LOST HIS TEMPER WITH ARTIE...



WHEN LILY CAME HOME LATE THAT NIGHT, AS SHE OPENED THE SHOP DOOR, SHE HEARD ARTIE CRYING HYSTERICALLY IN THE CLOSET...

ARTIE "MY BABY! MY BABY!"



SHE RAN TO THE CLOSET AND OPENED IT! ARTIE LOOKED UP AT HER WITH TEAR-FILLED RED EYES.

I TRIED TO STOP HOZIR... SON... SON! HE WOULDN'T LISTEN!

WHAT HAPPENED, DARLING?



DADDY HIT ME! IT MADE HOZIR ANGRY! HOZIR SAID HE'D DO IT THIS TIME! I COULDN'T STOP HIM!

DO WHAT? TELL ME!



SUDDENLY LILY HEARD THE HUNNING... THE HUNNING OF A MOTOR...

HOZIR SAID... SON... SAID HE WAS GOING TO DO THE FERRIBLE THING! AND THEN I HEARD DADDY SCREAMING!

ARTIE WHAT'S THAT HOZIR?



IT'S THE MEAT-GRINDER, MOMMY! HOZIR PUT DADDY IN THE MEAT-GRINDER!

GOOD LORD!



LILY RUSHED TO THE MEAT-REFRIGERATOR! THE MEAT-GRINDER WAS ON... AND HUNNING! BELOW IT, ON THE FROSTY FLOOR, WAS A HUGE PILE OF RAW CHOP-MEAT...



EEEEEEEEEEEEEE!

I... I... TRIED TO STOP HIM, MOMMY! HOZIR WAS ANGRY... ANGRY! ANGRY!

HEH... HEH? YEP, KIDDER! THAT'S THE STONK! HOZIR MADE MINCE-MEAT OUT OF ARTIE'S STEP-DADDY! WELL! WE WOULDN'T MUNCH GOOD, ANYWAY! HE ONLY MARRIED LILY TO GET THE DOWN TO OPEN THE BUTCHERY SHOP! THE DOUGH THAT ARTIE'S REAL DADDY LEFT THEM! OF COURSE, SAM NEVER INTENDED TO END UP SO... SO INVOLVED IN HIS WORK!

BY THE WAY! NEXT TIME YOU EAT A HAMBURGER, DON'T LOOK TOO HARD! YOU MIGHT FIND A BOLD TROOP IN IT... JAWW! AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE HAM-KEEPER! SEE YOU LATER!



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! YEP! IT'S YOUR OLD FRIEND, *THE VAULT-KEEPER*. AMBARKING! I SEE MY HOST, C.E., HAA FINISHED HIS...YOU SHOULD PARDON THE EXPRESSION...*HORROR*! STORY. AND NOW IT'S MY TURN! WELL, I'M READY! ARE YOU? GOT THE *SHELLING SALTS* HARDY? GOOD! YOU'LL NEED THEM BEFORE YOU'RE THROUGH WITH THIS *SPINE-TINGLER* I CALL...

## A ROTTIN' TRICK!



CLINT BARTON MADE HIS WAY NERVOUSLY DOWN THE DARK MIDDING STREET OF THE LITTLE SNEAK SEAPORT TOWN! FROM TIME TO TIME, HE WOULD STOP IN THE SHADOWS OF A DOORWAY...LISTENING FOR THE SOUND OF FOOTSTEPS BEHIND HIM! HE WAS BEING FOLLOWED. HE KNEW THAT! THEY'D TRAILED HIM TO THE WATERFRONT AREA. THEY WERE NOT ON HIS HEELS! HE WIPED HIS PERSPIRING FACE, GASPING FOR BREATH...



I'VE GOT TO GET AWAY! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS COUNTRY. BUT HOW? WHO CAN I TURN TO?

AND THEN HE REMEMBERED RICK! ESSIE HAD TOLD HIM RICK WAS A FISHERMAN! RICK HAD A BOAT! RICK COULD HELP HIM! CLINT BARTED ACROSS THE ROAD THAT RAN BESIDE THE WHARF...



"RICK! THAT'S IT! HE COULD SET ME OUT OF THE COUNTRY BY BOAT!"

HEAVY FOOTSTEPS CLACKED OVER THE COBBLESTONES BEHIND AERON! THEY WERE SETTING CLOSER, NOW! HE HAD TO HIDE! LATER, IF THEY DIDN'T FIND HIM, HE'D LOOK FOR RICK...



"THERE'S A SKIFF TIED UP DOWN THERE WITH A TARPULIN ROLLED UP! I'LL HIDE THERE!"

CLINT SWUNG HIMSELF OVER THE EDGE OF THE WHARF AND DROPPED INTO THE SKIFF AS NOISELESSLY AS HE COULD! HE UNFURLED THE CANYAS AND, CURLING HIMSELF UP IN THE BOTTOM OF THE BOAT, COVERED HIMSELF WITH IT...



"LEAD! I'M TIRED! BEEN HUNNING FOR TWO DAYS! GOT TO BE STILL NOW...CAN'T ATTRACT ATTENTION!"

CLINT HELD HIS BREATH AS THE VOICES AND FOOTSTEPS DREW NEAR! HE COULD HEAR THEM RESITATE OVERHEAD ON THE WHARF, TALKING TO EACH OTHER IN LOW TONES! A FLASH OF LIGHT STREAMED IN THROUGH A TINY HOLE IN THE TARPULIN, AND CLINT KNEW THEY WERE COVERING THE PIER AND ITS BOATS WITH A FLASHLIGHT...



"THEY'RE ALL BE ON EIGHT IF THEY SPOTTED ME!"

CLINT LOOKED AT HIS WATCH! IT WAS THREE-THIRTY! SOON IT WOULD BE SETTING LIGHT AND THE FISHERMEN WOULD BE COMING DOWN TO THEIR BOATS! HE'D LOOK FOR RICK THEN! CLINT LIT A CIGARETTE AND BEGAN PUFFING IT! HE LAY BACK, HIS HEAD ON THE SKIFF'S STEER-SEAT, AND SMILED...



"SHE WAS ALL RIGHT, ESSIE! REAL HORROROUS BABE! YEAH...I LIKED THAT DOLL!"

THEN THE VOICES AND THE FOOTSTEPS DIED AWAY, AND CLINT BREATHED A SIGH OF RELIEF! SOON ONLY THE LAPPING OF THE WATER AND THE CREAKING OF THE PLANKS COULD BE HEARD! CLINT THREW BACK THE CANYAS AND LOOKED UP AT THE STARRY SKY...



"RICK'S MY ONLY HOPE! HE'S THE ONLY ONE I CAN TURN TO! I WONDER, I WONDER IF HE STILL HATES ME OVER WHAT HAPPENED TO ESSIE?"

CLINT MET ESSIE RIGHT THERE IN THAT BROADCAST TOWN ABOUT TWO YEARS AGO! HE'D HIRED A TOURING CAN IN ATHENS AND COME DOWN THE COAST LOOKING FOR A LITTLE RELAXATION! HE'D MADE HIS ROUNDS OF THE WATERFRONT JOINTS AND THEN HE'D SEEN HER! THE CHEAP TWO-BIT BARD HAD ALMOST DROWNED OUT HER VOICE, BUT THE SPOTLIGHT'S REVEALED ALL THAT CLINT'D BEEN INTERESTED IN...



"BEST! WAITER! WILL YOU GIVE THIS NOTE TO THAT YOUNG LAD WHO'S SINGING?"

"YES, SIR! SOON AS SHE'S THROUGH!"

AFTER HER SONG, EDDIE'S COME TO CLINT'S TABLE.



I... I RECEIVED YOUR NOTE!

DO I SEE? WON'T YOU... SIT DOWN?

EVEN IN THAT SMOKE-FILLED DIVE, EDDIE'D LOOKED LIKE A HOLLYWOOD MOVIE STAR...

YOU'RE AN AMERICAN AREN'T YOU?

YES! IS MY BREECH THAT BAD?



NO! YOU SPEAK IT QUITE WELL! IT IS YOUR CLOTHES THAT IS NOW I CAN TELL!

YOU'RE A CLEVER GIRL, MISS... MISS... ER... WHAT IS YOUR NAME?



IT IS A VERY LONG, VERY HARD NAME TO PRONOUNCE! BUT YOU CAN CALL ME EDDIE!

MY NAME'S CLINTON ASHTON! CALL ME CLINT! WOULD YOU HAVE LUNCH WITH ME TOMORROW, EDDIE?



I... I DON'T KNOW! I DON'T THINK SO! IF RICK WERE TO FIND OUT...

RICK? WHO'S RICK? DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE MARRIED?



NOT AS YET! RICK AND I ARE ENGAGED! WE ARE TO BE MARRIED AS SOON AS HE HAS PAID OFF THE BOAT!

THE BOAT? OH! YOUR BOYFRIEND'S A FISHERMAN?



YES! AND VERY JEALOUS! HE HAS INSISTED THAT AS SOON AS WE ARE MARRIED, I STOP WORKING!

BUT YOU'RE NOT MARRIED YET, EDDIE! I STILL HAVE A CHANCE!



THAT NIGHT, CLINT'D CHECKED IN AT THE TOWN'S ONLY MOTEL! AS HE'D UNZIPPED FOR BED...



SHE'S A CUTE NAME! THERE IS SOMETHING TO BE FOR!

THAT'S THE WAY CLINTON ANTON HAD ALWAYS BEEN! WITH THE INHERITANCE HE'D GOTTEN FROM HIS WEALTHY FATHER, CLINT'D TAKEN TO TRAVELING AROUND THE WORLD MAKING 'CONQUESTS'! ESSIE WAS TO BE JUST ANOTHER NAME ON HIS ALREADY LEXICON LIST! THE NEXT DAY...



ESSIE! NO YOU DID COME!

YES! I KNOW I SHOULDN'T HAVE, BUT...

CLINT'D TAKEN HER HAND...

YOU COULDN'T HELP IT! PLEASE! COULD YOU? LAST NIGHT SOMETHING HAPPENED... BETWEEN YOU AND I... SOMETHING WONDERFUL!



THEY'D GONE FOR A DRIVE. HE AND ESSIE! THEY'D DRIVEN OUT OF TOWN AND UP INTO THE MOUNTAINS WHERE THEY'D BE SAFE FROM PRYING EYES.



P- PLEASE, CLINT! I HARDLY KNOW YOU! PLEASE!

YOU KNOW ALL THERE IS TO KNOW, ESSIE! YOU KNOW THAT I LOVE YOU! LET'S NOT FIGHT IT!

IT'D BEEN AS EASY AS THAT! CLINT HAD A WAY WITH WOMEN! HE KNEW IT! IN FACT, ESSIE'D BEEN A PUSHOVER! BUT SHE'D BEEN PRETTIER THAN MOST, SO CLINT'D HUNG AROUND LONGER THAN USUAL! THEN ONE DAY, COMING DOWN THE MOUNTAIN FROM ONE OF THEIR DAILY DRIVES...



THE BRAKES! THEY WON'T HOLD! THE CAR'S OUT OF CONTROL!

EEEEEEEEEE!

JUST BEFORE THE CARRODING CAR PLUMBED OVER THE ENHANCEMENT, CLINT'D JUMPED CLEAR! ESSIE WENT DOWN WITH THE CAR, SPINNING OVER AND OVER.



SHE'D BEEN BARELY HURT! CLINT'S GOTTEN AWAY WITH A FEW SCRATCHES! THAT NIGHT, CLINT'S MET ESSIE FOR THE FIRST TIME! HE'D COME TO CLINT'S HOTEL ROOM...



LOOK, HIDE! I'M SORRY ABOUT WHAT HAPPENED TO ESSIE! I TRIED TO STOP! THE BRAKES...

SHE... SHE WILL BE OUTFITTED FOR LIFE, MR. ANTON! HER FACE HAS BEEN... BOB BOB



"YES! I KNOW, NICK! I SPOKE TO THE DOCTOR! BUT... WHY DID YOU COME HERE TONIGHT?"

"YOU, YOU WILL MARRY HER STILL, EN, MR. ASHTON? THIS WILL NOT MAKE A DIFFERENCE?"



"MARRY HER? DON'T BE A FOOL, NICK! I NEVER INTENDED TO MARRY HER!"

"WHAT? BUT SHE TOLD ME... WHEN SHE GAVE ME BACK THE RING! SHE SAID YOU'D TALKED ABOUT IT!"



"TALK IS CHEAP, NICK! BESIDES, I'D BE A FOOL TO MARRY HER, NOW!"

"THEN YOU NEVER LOVED HER, EN? THIS WAS JUST A GAME WITH YOU?"



"THAT'S RIGHT, NICK! JUST A GAME! NOW THE GAME'S OVER, CALLED BECAUSE OF RAIN! AND I'M HITTING THE ROAD!"

"YOU ARE NO GOOD, MR. ASHTON!"



"MARRY THE GIRL YOURSELF, NICK!"

"I WILL... IF SHE WILL HAVE ME!"



THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENED! CLINT'D JOPPED A TRAIN NORTH... OUT OF ESSH'S AND NICK'S LIVES! NOW, CLINT WONDERED WHAT NICK WOULD SAY WHEN THEY'D MEET! OVERHEAD, THE SKY WAS LIGHTENING! DARK WAS COMING UP.

"IT'S GETTING LIGHT! I BETTER START LOOKING FOR NICK!"



CLINT COMBED THE WATERFRONT SEARCHING THE SLEEPY FACES FOR NICK! FINALLY HE SPOTTED HIM, WORKING OVER THE ENGINE OF HIS SMALL BUT STURDY-LOOKING CRAFT.

"YES, NICK! IT'S ME! CLINTON ASHTON! I'M IN TROUBLE, NICK! BAD TROUBLE! I NEED HELP! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF THIS COUNTRY!"

"A WOMAN? AGAIN, MR. ASHTON?"



"YES!  
HOW DID  
YOU  
KNOW?"

"I GUESSED!  
CAN YOU PAY?"



"HOW MUCH?  
I'VE GOT ONE  
THOUSAND  
LIRA WITH ME,  
BUT I CAN  
RAISE MORE!"



"IT WILL BE  
ENOUGH, MR.  
'ASHTON'! GET  
BELOW, BEFORE  
SOMEONE SEES  
YOU!"



SOON THE LITTLE FISHING  
VESSEL'S ENGINE BEGAN TO  
SPUTTER, THEN RAN HEAD-  
STRONGLY! BELOW DECK,  
CLINT FELT THE CRAFT BEGIN  
TO MOVE AWAY FROM ITS  
WHARF AND OUT INTO THE  
ROLLING SEA...



CLINT LOOKED BACK AT THE RECEIVING GREEK  
MAINLAND...

"WHERE ARE  
YOU TAKING  
ME, NICK?"

"I KNOW AN ISLAND.  
NOT FAR. SEVERAL HOURS...  
WHERE YOU WILL BE TAKEN  
CARE OF UNTIL YOUR TROUBLES  
BACK THERE PASS!"



THE BOAT ROLLED AND PITCHED, MOVING FOR-  
WARD THROUGH THE CHOPPY SEA...

"IT'S GOOD OF YOU TO  
DO THIS FOR ME, NICK.  
'AFTER WHAT HAPPENED?"

"WHAT'S DONE  
CANNOT BE  
UNDONE, MR.  
'ASHTON'!"



THEY SAILED IN SILENCE ACROSS THE TORMING  
BLUE WATER! SOON A SMALL ISLAND ROSE LIKE  
A SPECK ON THE HORIZON, GROWING STEADILY  
LARGER...

"IS THAT IT, NICK?  
IS THAT THE  
ISLAND?"

"YES, MR. 'ASHTON'! THAT  
IS WHERE I AM TAKING  
YOU!"



CLINT PRESSED THE THOUSAND LIRA INTO  
NICK'S HAND AS THE BOAT SIGHTED THE  
ISLAND'S SHORE-LINE AND ENTERED A SMALL  
WHITE-BEACHED BAY.

"HERE, NICK!  
HERE'S YOUR  
MONEY! AND  
THANKS!"

"THANK YOU, MR. 'ASHTON'!  
YOU CAN WALK TO SHORE  
FROM HERE! THEY WILL  
TAKE CARE OF YOU!"



CLINT SLIPPED OVER THE SIDE OF NICK'S BOAT. BACK WAS RIGHT! THE WATER WAS WAIST-HIGH! CLINT STARTED TO WADE TOWARD THE WHITE BEACH...

NICK'S BOAT BEGAN TO DRIFT...

THE GAP BETWEEN THEM

CLINT WAS NEARING THE BEACH! THEY HAD TO SHOUT TO HEAR EACH OTHER...



OR, BY THE WAY, NICK? I FORGOT TO ASK YOU...

YES, MR. ASHTON!



HOW'S ESSIE?

ESSIE?



YES? NOW IS SHE? YOU TWO EVER GET MARRIED?

NO, MR. ASHTON!



SEE, THAT'S TOO BAD, NICK! WHY NOT?

BECAUSE SHE KILLED HERSELF, MR. ASHTON!

CLINT SPUN AROUND! NICK HAD STARTED THE ENGINE! THE SMALL BOAT WAS TURNING AND HEADING FOR THE OPEN SEA...



NICK? NICK? WHEN WILL YOU COME BACK FOR ME?

NEVER... MR. ASHTON!

CLINT STOOD THERE ON THE WHITE SAND, WATCHING THE BOAT DISAPPEAR OVER THE HORIZON! THEN HE TURNED! TWO PASTY-FACED MEN STOOD BEFORE HIM! ONE OF THEM EXTENDED A LUMPY HAND! NICK TOOK IT AND THEY SHOOK HANDS WARMLY...



WELCOME, MY FRIEND! WELCOME TO THE ISLAND OF SIRRA!

HELLO! MY NAME'S CLINT. UM... WHAT DID YOU SAY?

COME, EVERYBODY! WE HAVE A NEW ADDITION TO OUR SOCIETY!

THEY CAME FROM BEHIND THE TREES AND BRUSH THAT BORDERED THE WHITE BEACH! THEY CAME WITH THEIR PESTERING SORES, THEIR ASH-WHITE SKIN, THEIR BLOATED FEATURES! THEY GATHERED AROUND CLINT, TOUCHING HIM, EXAMINING HIM CURIOUSLY! HORRIBLY DISTORTED REMAINS OF HUMANITY, BRINING... BURLING! SOME BLIND... SOME WITH FINGERS GONE... LEGS WITHERED AWAY... ARMS BOTTED OFF! THEY BELONGED HIM!



WELCOME TO SIRRA! WELCOME!

SIRRA! GOOD LORD! THIS IS THE LEPER COLONY!

WELL, YES! AND THERE'S NO GETTING AWAY FROM IT EITHER, CLINT! THAT'S WHY NICK SAID HE'S NEVER COMING BACK FOR YOU! YOU GOT IT, JOO... LEPROSY, THAT IS! BURE! DIDN'T YOU SHAKE HANDS WITH 'EM? DIDN'T THEY TOUCH YOU? COME, COME, CLINT! NO USE COMING TO PIECES RIGHT AWAY! YOU WILL IN DUE TIME, ANYWAY! AND NOW, KIDDIES, I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE CRIFT-KEEPER!



BYE! SEE YOU NEXT IN MY DRY HALL, THE VAULT OF HORROR!



# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Geppi

Publisher—Rene Cockran

Dear Crypt-Keeper

I really like the story in CRYPT #11, "Well-Cooked Hamster!" I guess what goes around comes around.

Orlando Garcia 1728 W Superior  
Chicago, IL 60602

Especially on a ratatouille! —CK

In CRYPT #10 you made a mistake. Under your "WAF" column you said I was from Texas? Caught you!

CRYPT #10 was a good issue. "Bargain in Death" was an excellent story. Said it all. "Ants in her Trancer" was pretty boring and the worst story in the book. "A-Comy Story" wasn't that good. No offense, but you can do better. "The Ventriloquist's Dummy" was a good story. I really liked the end.

John Brown Harrison, TN

I like what you look like on the show better than in the comic. I like dead zombies better than living people. How come the Old Witch looks the scariest?

James Frutkin Agawam, MA

That's what I need—leading questions! —CK

Once or twice on your show, you referred to your pet named Scab. What exactly is Scab? And how might I one day become an accomplished Scab-keeper, like you? Your willing minion of the darkness,

James Fan, age 15 Orem, UT

Scab is a crusty B\* devil, hired during the extra-strict. —CK

Though I'm not a fan of comics, I love all the ECs (except WEIRD SCIENCE and FANTASY). In France it is very difficult to find some of it, or they cost too much. In addition, we cannot get back issues.

I have known "Tales from the Crypt" by the TV show, but today I prefer the comics. I'm a new fan, tell me how I can [get] your [comic]. Does a catalogue exist?

To the Crypt-Keeper: You are (and) very bad and I love it! [You] are better than Asterix & Obelix. I love your concept!

David Ghes Montreuil, FRANCE

All back issues are available, check the end of the column. Order lots at once and minimize shipping costs. Better than "Asterix"! Wow! —CK

What comic book is Demon Knight in? Do you know anything about a fan club? What comic book is "Split Personality" in?

How I want to tell you about my finger nails. I paint them black in honor of you. I also have blood red lipstick.

Tatjana Protskova Concord, NC

Demon Knight is in no original EC comic. They made him up! "Split Personality" is in VAULT #30 (will be our #18). Blood red lipstick is better than lips stinky with red blood—or is it? —CK

I am writing because in your last issue there was a letter from someone using my name. I was not amused. I have disposed of the impostor. Anyone else who attempts it will suffer the same fate. There is only one Demon of the Dark and it is I!

Dark Demon address unknown

Who is the Dark Demon? Is he some kind of EC joke? Please print my address.

Pete Arnold, age 10 10 Lambert ST  
Washington, NJ 07052

We're not sure who he is, but we figure he's not to be messed with! —CK

I've been collecting all the EC horror comic books and I have exactly 40 issues. I've also looked through other comic books, some lesser known titles by DC and other stuff, but nothing else has quite the unique, original, creative, eye-catching, innovative writing or art styles as EC. EC has got to be the most worthwhile, entertaining, get-it-your-money's-worth comic around.

Audrey Cheehan address unknown

1) Did Sam Wrightson draw some stories for EC? 2) Who is the creator of The Crypt-Keeper?

Marc Gies Cole Barcelona, SPAIN

EC produces Wrightson by 18 years, but Sam's work owes much to Ingels' EC stuff. I guess I'm 88% Ingels, 12% Poltash—and ah-boy! —CK

## MORE HBO STUFF

Thanks to David Lowery II for shedding some light on this whole "Alma Cadaver" mystery. And I have to agree with Chad Kuchins. "You, Murderer" was totally sinister! And if anyone wants to buy some "Crypt" cards, I've got quite a few packs, so get in touch with me.

Was HBO a "The Man Who Was Death" based on "A Shocking Way to Die" in CRYPT #6?

Please continue to print my address, and if anyone out there wants to buy some cards, or just to hang out via mail, write to me.

Myron James RR 4 Box 141  
Rockville, IN 47872

We've seen only one HBO episode ("The Reluctant Vampire"), but assume "Man" was based on the story of the same name in CRYPT I. —CK

If you want you can put me in your comic. I always wanted to be a vampire or a zombie. I send you my picture so you know what I look like. But don't show it to anyone else! Please print my [address]

Domink Zakreveld 81-27 66 RD  
Manhasset, NY 11278

I looked at your picture—maybe you should try out for ghoul! —CK

I really enjoyed CRYPT #11, the artwork by Joe Orlando in "Madon Bluebeard" was in my opinion, some of his best! "Return" was a good story. When I there a story called "Return" in one of your sci-fi comics?

A few things I noticed in this issue: "You completely left out all of the greetings such as 'Dear Crypt-Keeper'." I guess this was because you received many letters and had to make room. Also, I noticed that you now are publishing at a different place. Please print my address.

Burton Hendrix

POB 117  
Broken Bow, OK 74720

A "Return" was in it (SC 8 and a "Return Show" in CRIME 13, a "Round Trip" in W-S-P 8, and a complete Santa round in "Revolution" in SPOT 11). —CK

Whaddya hear whaddya say? I just put down Tales from the Crypt #12 and all I can say is "Wow!" I'm impressed! Again!

"A-Comy Story" had to be my favorite. I don't know why. It wasn't as spooky as the others, maybe because you were the narrator. Crypt!

How about making another EC title that adapts your Saturday morning cartoons? Please? Pretty please? Ugly please? Please print my address (don't give it to Professor van Helsing, though. Hah. And doubt this never, "Blood is thicker than water" and further, too!"

Tony Martinez

6041 S California Av  
Chicago, IL 60629

I love your comics! My mom isn't too crazy about you, though. I'm a big horror fan. I watch CARS SHADOWS and stuff like that.

[Your] TV shows are okay, but nothing can match the original stories. The movie that was made back in 1972 is dumb. You tell Patrick Burkett that Mike Miller said I was dumb!

I would like to ask you if you could give me some tips for a book I'm writing. It's about 5 strangers that try to fight off zombies that are attacking New York City. So far, the book isn't scary.

Could you give me some ideas on how to make my room look like yours?

Mike Miller

Middletown, PA

Burt! Dual your room weekly. I see two busts of you. —CK

In the original "Crypt" movie (1972) what is the title of the story that stars the great Peter Cushing as old Arthur Grimsby, and in which issue does it appear in? You may print my address.

Alan Raine

Farm House  
22 Plowmorth RD  
Sedition Durham  
DH7 6PB ENGLAND

According to my notes (made in the dark), that's "Poetic Justice" from HAUNT 12. They changed the names to protect the guilty! —CK

I must say I was overjoyed with this issue of CRYPT. It's the only issue—not issue that the only comic I've ever read of the way through and been totally satisfied with every single story! Please print my address. (Over notice that the Crypt-Keeper's "mummy" in "Lower Birth" looks just like the HBO Crypt-Keeper with black hair!) Respectfully yours

Myron James

RR #502 141  
Rockville IN 47872

Watch for the "Birth" announcement in our CRYPT 17 (or jump the gun and get GLAD CRYPT 1). —CK

HBO's "Abe Cadaver." That show has changed many of the stories to the point where they have absolutely no resemblance to the original story whatsoever. In some cases, such as "Three's a Crowd," I think that HBO actually improved on the original story. But in other stories it seems like someone's big ego just got in the way of us getting to see a good story. But as far as I know, "Abe" is the only story where they changed the title. In terms of plot, this story most closely resembles the story "Dead Night" from CRYPT (original EC) 37, which will be your number 21.

Warren Standish

Sunnyvale, CA

Will there ever be any (HBO "Crypt") episodes released on video? Due to my unfortunate financial crisis, I was forced to cancel my cable TV. If you print my letter (you have my permission) I will give you my first born child—or a check for five bucks.

Elaine Ruthe

Glenn, AZ

I like to pass up books, but I don't know. Readers? —CK

I'm writing this letter in regards to your HBO "Crypt" cards. You see, I'm missing card number 25 from my collection. If you have any information on this I would really like to know! Enough about your cards, and more about your comics! They're simply wonderful! Just like the old Vault-Keeper's tales! Your covers are great, bright, and full of detail! Jack Davis is the best (at least I think) at drawing you. Al Feldstein is great at drawing corpses' faces and bodies! Karen is still the best I think. Your fan and reader

Grant Smith, age 11

Stanford, CT

I think you are an extremely easy comic. The only thing I don't understand is that you look different on TV (even senior).

One more thing, ALIEN and PUMPKIN HEAD, have nothing on you. I am free for a date anytime, I'm looking for an older man (with lots of money). I AM a female so don't get nervous.

Tomorrow is Mardi Gras, so "Happy Mardi Gras!" from New Orleans!

C. Delaine 21

Marrero, LA

You are a female; that's what makes me nervous. A date in New Orleans would make being a zombie worth it (oh, that's weird!). —CK



IANF (I also heard from):

Danny Epping  
Jeffrey Jones, Jr. ("print my address")  
4235 Bensalem BLVD Bensalem, PA 19020  
Dave Kelly  
Tapeles, KS  
Andy Kimble ("print my address")  
215 E Heritage DR  
Winnetka, IL 60447  
Markus (Killer Kid) Lavender

address unknown

Jess Lovelace  
Derek McKenna  
Chris (POG) Polday  
address unknown  
Darren Seiders  
Jonathan Smith  
Derek Stodd  
Renae White  
Andreas Witting, age 9  
address unknown  
Anchorage, AK  
Houston, TX  
address unknown  
Fountain, CO  
Houston, TX  
Allamore, OH  
Tempe, AZ  
Jamaica, NY





HERE'S THE CHILLING TALE OF  
A GAL WHO FOUND SHE WAS...

# BOARD TO DEATH!



THE BUZZING...THE INSISTENT DROPPING...HAMMERED INTO MYRNA'S EARS AS SHE CAME TO! SHE FELT HER HEART POUNDING IN HER CHEST, WATCHING THE RISE AND FALL OF THE CONTINUOUS HUMMING! MYRNA OPENED HER EYES BUT SHE SAW NOTHING! ONLY A VOID OF BLACK FILLED WITH THE EAR-SPLITTING ROAR! SHE FELT DIZZY AND BORN...

WHAT...WHERE...WHERE  
AM I?



MYRNA TRIED TO MOVE! ACROSS HER CHEST A BAND OF SOMETHING TIGHT AND IN HER LEGS WERE FASTENED ALSO! MYRNA GASPED! SHE WAS TIED UP! THE HUMMING SOUND CONTINUED! MYRNA MOVED HER HAND! HER HAND WAS FREE! SHE REACHED UP INTO THE DROPPING DARKNESS AND TOUCHED SOMETHING... SOMETHING FLAT AND HARD ABOVE HER! FEAR CLUTCHED AT MYRNA'S HEART NOW! SHE REACHED OUT TO HER SIDE AND SCREAMED...

I...I'M IN A COFFIN! I'M BURIED  
ALIVE! HE DID IT! HE DID IT!



MYRRA LIFTED HER OTHER HAND AND BEAT HER SMALL FISTS ON THE FIRM WALLS AROUND HER! AGAIN SHE SHRIEDED...

OH, LORD...HELP ME! SOMEBODY, HELP ME! HE'S BURIED ME ALIVE!

EEEEEEEEEE...



THEN MYRRA BEGAN TO SOB! SHE HAD HER WRISTED FINGERS AROUND HER WOODEN PRISON! THE BUZZING IN HER HEAD KRIPEL INTO HER BRAIN...

I'M SUFFOCATING! THAT'S WHAT'S HAPPENING! THE BUZZING...I...I...I'M GOING TO DIE!



MYRRA REACHED DOWN AND TOUCHED THE HEAVY ROPE THAT CUT INTO HER REARER CHESS...

HE...HE TIED ME DOWN! BUT HE FORGOT MY HANDS!



SHE UNDOED THE KNOT AND BREATHED HARD AS SHE PULSED THE ROPES RACE! BUT THE HUMMING SOUND CONTINUED...

I...I'M GETTING DIZZY! I FEEL MYSELF FALLING! HELP! SOMEBODY...PLEASE HELP ME!



MYRRA'S COFFIN PRISON SEEMED TO BE TURNING! SPINNING! HER LEGS WERE STILL TIED AND IT WAS IMPOSSIBLE FOR HER TO REACH THE ROPES THAT SECURED THEM! SHE LAY BACK GASPING...

I...I CAN'T BELIEVE IT! HEH! ACTUALLY DID IT! HE'D THREATENED TO DO IT SO OFTEN! HE KNEW I WAS AFRAID OF BEING BURIED ALIVE! EVEN SINCE I WAS A CHILD!



I REMEMBER THE INCIDENT SO WELL! I WAS PLAYING IN AN OLD ABANDONED MINE! I MUST HAVE JAMMED A RHODING POLD LOCKER...BECAUSE THE NEXT THING I SAW...

THE ROOF! IT'S COMING IN! EEEEEEE...



IT TOOK THEM FOUR HOURS TO DIG THEIR WAY THROUGH TO ME! I CRIED ALL THE WHILE! FINALLY, THE BLACK DIRT FELL AWAY, AND A WHITE FACE GINNED AT ME...

ROR...ROR...ROR...I'M GOING TO DIE!

TAKE IT EASY, BOB! YOU'RE ALL RIGHT NOW! WE'VE GOT YOU! YOU'RE SAFE!





"EVER, EVER SINCE THEN, I'VE BEEN DEATHLY AFRAID OF BEING BURIED ALIVE!" HEARD WHEN IT! I TOLD HIM ON OUR FIRST DATE! HE'S GONE TO ONE OF THOSE AMUSEMENT PARKS...

"I'M SCARED, MYRNA! DON'T BE A PRUDE. IT'S THE FUNNEL OF LOVE!"

"NO, HERE! NO! I'M AFRAID!"



"WHAT ARE YOU SCARED OF, MYRNA? IT'S JUST A BARN PLACE WHERE WE CAN..."

"IT'S SOMETHING THAT HAPPENED TO ME WHEN I WAS A KID HERE! I WAS CAUGHT IN A CAGE—AND EVER SINCE THEN..."



"YES! HERE WHEN! AND LATER WHEN WE WERE MARRIED, HE USED TO JOKE ABOUT IT..."

"IF I DON'T GET A GREAT BIG HUSBAND AND A NICE JURY BOX THIS VERY MINUTE... I'M GOING TO DISA ROLE AND PUT YOU IN AND BURY YOU ALL!"

"HERE! STOP IT!"



"HERE NEVER MADE MUCH MONEY AND I WAS PRETTY HARD ON HIM! HE BEGAN TO ARGUE A LOT! THAT'S WHEN HE STARTED TO THREATEN ME..."

"LEAVE ME ALONE, MYRNA! I DO THE BEST I CAN! THERE'S JUST NO CHANCE FOR ADVANCEMENT HERE! NOW!"

"LOOK AT ME! I HAVEN'T BOUGHT A NEW DRESS IN MONTHS!"



"I'LL BUY YOU A NEW DRESS—WHEN I BURY YOU ALIVE!"

"STOP IT, HERE! STOP TALKING LIKE THAT!"



"MYRNA SCARPED! THE HUMMING WAS LOUDER NOW! SHE FELT A WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEEP OVER HER, ... FELT HERSELF SPINNING DIZZILY..."

"AND HE DID IT! HERE FINALLY DID IT! I'M GOING TO DIE! BURIED ALIVE! HE'S BURIED ME ALIVE LIKE HE BURIED ME IN THAT STINKING MINE TOWN..."



"... HERE TALKED ME INTO MOVING TO THAT HOTTER HOLE... MILES FROM NOWHERE... AND I FOOLISHLY WENT! HE'D BEEN OFFERED A JOB WITH A CHANCE FOR ADVANCEMENT! WE HAD TO DRIVE THREE DAYS OVER BAD ROADS TO REACH IT..."

"WELL, MYRNA! THIS IS IT! IT ISN'T MUCH, BUT THE PAY IS GOOD, AND WE NO TIME AT ALL..."

"IT'S HORRIBLE... DON'T WORRY! I'VE GOT SOMETHING BUT A SHITTY SMARTY TOWN! THAT'S ALL..."



I WAS CRAZY TO HAVE LISTENED TO HIM! BUT I WAS **FRAUDS!** I HAD TO STAY! EVERY DAY HERE WOULD GO OFF TO THE ONE-PTS AND LEAVE ME IN THAT FILTHY NOVEL I WAS FORCED TO **GALL HOME!**

I HATE IT HERE!  
HATE IT!



AND THEN I MET ANDY! ANDY WORKED WITH HERS! ONE NIGHT HERE BROUGHT HIM HOME TO DINNER...

THIS IS MY WIFE MYRNA! ROBERT MEET ANDY CARSON!

HOW DO, MYRNA?

HELLO!



I DON'T KNOW WHY IT HAPPENED OR HOW! IT HAPPENED! PERHAPS I WAS BORED WITH HERS... BORED WITH THE CRAB LIFE I WAS LIVING! ANYWAY, I FELL IN LOVE WITH ANDY CARSON.

LOOK, MYRNA! THIS IS MYRNA! ALL WRONG!

HERE'S AT THE ONE-PTS, ANDY! HE'LL BE GONE TELL MICHON! KISS ME!



I SAW ANDY EVERY CHANCE I COULD GET! TO MAKE SOME EXCUSE AND GO FOR A WALK... AND MEET HIM WHERE WE WOULDN'T BE SEEN.

WHAT ABOUT HER, MYRNA? DOES HE SUSPECT?

NOT A BIT! HE'S TOO STUPID. TOO BLIND!



BUT I WAS MISTAKEN! HERS AND SUSPECT! ONE NIGHT...

IT'S BETTER SO, MYRNA! HERE'LL BE COMING OFF HIS SHIFT SOON!

YES! KISS ME GOOD-NIGHT, ANDY CARSON!



HERS MUST HAVE GONE OFF HIS SHIFT EARLY THAT NIGHT, INTENDING TO CATCH US! AS ANDY TOOK ME IN HIS ARMS, THE FRONT DOOR SWUNG OPEN.

HERE!

TAKE YOUR FILTHY HANDS OFF HER, CARSON!



HERE WAS MAD! STEAMING MAD! I TRIED TO SAY SOMETHING.

WE... WE WERE GOING TO TELL YOU, HERE! WE...

SHUT UP! GET OUT, CARSON! GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!

GO ON A MINUTE, HERE! I...



ANDY NEVER FINISHED HIS SENTENCE! HERE HE HIT HIM WITH ALL HIS WEIGHT AND ANDY'S MOUTH SPURTED BLOOD! THEN HERE HE THREW HIM THROUGH THE DOOR, SLAMMED IT, AND LOCKED IT.

HERE!  
I...

HOW I'M GOING  
TO TAKE CARE OF  
YOU, MYRNA!

HERE HE CAME AT ME! I BACKED AWAY! HE PICKED UP A FOKER FROM THE COAL STOVE AS HE PASSED...

YOU'RE CHEAP  
AND ROTTEN!  
YOU SHOULD BE  
DEAD, MYRNA!  
DEAD!

PUT DOWN  
THAT FOKER,  
HERE! DON'T

I'M NOT GOING  
TO KILL YOU WITH  
IT, MYRNA! NO!  
THAT'S TOO SHORT...  
TO GOOD FOR YOU!  
I'M JUST GOING TO  
PUT YOU OUT  
FOR A WHILE...

PLEASE.  
HERE!  
I'M  
SORRY!  
I STILL  
LOVE  
YOU!  
PLEASE!

HE CAME AT ME, BLARING! HE SHARLED HEAVILY.

THEN YOU KNOW WHAT I'M  
GOING TO DO, MYRNA! I'M GOING  
TO PUT YOU IN A FIRE BOX AND  
BURY YOU ALIVE! YES! YOU'VE  
ALWAYS BEEN AFRAID OF THAT!

NO! NO!  
HERE!  
PLEASE...  
SOS. SOS.

HE WAS SHOUTING AS HE BROUGHT THE FOKER DOWN ON MY HEAD...

THAT'S THE WAY YOU'RE GOING TO  
DIE, MYRNA! BURIED ALIVE!

THE ROARING WAS LOUDER NOW! MYRNA RAO TO SHOUT INTO THE BLACKNESS TO HEAR HERSELF ABOVE IT...

AND HE DID IT... SOS, SOS! HE'S  
BURIED ME ALIVE!

SHE POUNDED HER BAW AND BLEEDING FISTS  
AGAINST HER FIRE PRISON, SCREAMING...

I'M GOING TO DIE! I'M GOING TO DIE!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLO! I'M COOKIN' MAAM! SMELL THE FETID ODOR? IT'S THE EVIL BREW IN MY CAULDRON! COME INCOME INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR! YES IT'S YOUR SHRIVER-CHIEF, THE OLD WITCH, READY TO DISH OUT ANOTHER CREEPY CONCOCTION OF SLIMY SAMPINES! I'VE NEED SO DARK UP CLOSE TO THE FIRE... KNEEL DOWN SO YOUR KNEES WON'T SHOCK. FASTEN YOUR DYING CAPS. TUCK YOUR BARBONS UNDER YOUR CHINS... AND I'LL FEED YOU THE MORNING MUSEL OF MELDRAMATIC MADNESS! I TELL.

## A SUCKER FOR A SPIDER!



MAXWELL STONEMAN, PRESIDENT OF THE COUNTY BANK AND TRUST COMPANY, PUSHED HIS CHAIR AWAY FROM THE ELABORATELY SET DINNER TABLE IN THE DINING ROOM OF HIS LUXURIOUS MANSION. HE SPINNED DOWN AT HIS DINING GUEST, THE BANK'S CHIEF TELLER, RANDOLPH SPURD...

COME, SPURD! BEFORE WE HAVE OUR COFFEE, I'D LIKE TO SHOW YOU SOMETHING! SOMETHING I THINK YOU'LL BE VERY INTERESTED IN! MY COLLECTION OF RARE SPIDERS!

SPIDERS? OH, DEAR!



WEALTHY BANNER STONEMAN LED HIS MEER-LOOKING CHIEF TELLER THROUGH THE RICHLI FURNISHED LIVING ROOM INTO A GLASS-BALLED GREEN-HOUSE.

SPIDERS HAVE BEEN TO I DON'T  
MY NOBBLION FEARS. LIKE  
SPURD! I'VE SPEC- SPIDERS.  
MENS FROM ALL MR.  
OVER THE WORLD! STONEMAN!



IT CAN STING YOU PRETTY BADLY, BUT ITS BITE ISN'T TOO TOXIC! IT'S ABOUT AS BAD AS A WASP'S BITE! THERE AREN'T MANY SPIDERS WHOSE BITES ARE POISONOUS! THE BLACK WIDOW IS ABOUT THE ONLY SPIDER FOUND IN THE UNITED STATES THAT CAN KILL A MAN!

COVERING ONE WALL OF THE GREEN-HOUSE WAS A LINE OF GLASS CASES! EACH CASE CONTAINED A SOIL BOTTOM AND WAS ARTISTICALLY PLANTED WITH TIGLAIAS...

I LOVE THEM, SPURD! AN AMAZING CREATURE - THE SPIDER! TAKE THIS ONE FOR EXAMPLE.



I'M DEATHLY AFRAID OF SPIDERS, MR. STONEMAN! CAN'T WE TALK BUSINESS NOW?

YES! IT OVER ME THE SPIDERS!

MAX STONEMAN POINTED THROUGH THE FRONT GLASS OF ONE OF THE CASES! INSIDE, A HUGE, HAIRY, EIGHT-LEGGED CREATURE CRUMCHED ON A BROAD LEAF...

THIS IS A TARANTULA! I GOT THIS ONE FROM A SEAMAN ON A BANANA BOAT! WHEN IT MATURES, IT WILL MEASURE SIX... NINE EIGHT INCHES ACROSS!



BANNER STONEMAN TOOK HIS CHIEF TELLER BY THE ARM AND LED HIM TO ANOTHER CASE.

LATER, SPURD! FIRST I MUST SHOW YOU THE PRIZE OF MY COLLECTION! HERE... IN THIS CASE! IT'S A VERMULA SPIDER! A VERY RARE VARIETY.

WHAT A LOVELY WEB! IT'S SPUN!



MR. STONEMAN REACHED DOWN BELOW THE SPIDER-CASE AND PICKED UP A LARGE JAR COVERED AT THE TOP WITH CHEESE-CLOTH.

I WANT YOU TO WATCH WHAT THE VERMULA DOES TO ONE OF ITS VICTIMS, SPURD! THIS IS A BOTTLE OF FLIES!

PLEASE, MR. STONEMAN! DON'T.



MAXWELL STONEMAN CAPTURED ONE OF THE IMPRISONED FLIES FROM THE JAR AND HELD IT IN HIS CLOSED FIST! THEN HE OPENED THE SPIDER CASE AND FLUNG THE UNFORTUNATE INSECT INTO THE VERMULA'S WEB.

THERE! NOW, REMEMBER HOW THE LITTLE FELLOW STICKS THERE!

POOR THING! IT'S SPRINGLING TO FREE ITSELF!



THE TRAPPED FLY TWISTED AND TURNED IN AN EFFORT TO TEAR ITSELF FROM THE WEB...

IT WON'T GET LOOSE, SPURD!  
THE VENUSSULA'S WEB IS COVERED  
WITH A THICK ADHESIVE  
COATING!

THE  
SPIDER'S  
COMING!

YES! NOW...WATCH! SEE  
NOW THE VENUSSULA SNAPS ITS  
FANGS INTO THE FLY! IT  
PARALYZES ITS VICTIM!

OH...DEAR!

THEN IT BEGINS TO SPIN A  
COVERING AROUND THE FLY!  
SEE? SEE NOW IT TURNS  
THE FLY OVER AND OVER,  
SPINNING ITS WEB AROUND  
IT LIKE A COCOON!

AND THE FLY  
IS IT STILL  
ALIVE?

EXACTLY! THE VENUSSULA  
WILL KEEP THE FLY THAT  
WAY UNTIL IT IS READY TO  
EAT IT! AT THAT TIME IT  
WILL INJECT THE FLY WITH  
AN ENZYME WHICH ACTS AS  
A PRE-DIGESTION AGENT!  
THEN THE SPIDER MENELY  
SUCKS UP THE LIQUIDIFIED  
INSIDES OF THE FLY, LEAV-  
ING ONLY A DRY OUTER  
SHELL, WHICH IT  
DISCARDS!

UGH! NOW  
DISGUSTING!

YOU... I AM, SIN! AND I  
LOOK SHOCKED  
AND CRUEL OF YOU  
SPURD  
TO THROW THOSE  
POOR FLIES INTO  
THAT VICIOUS  
SPIDER'S  
WEB!

COME, COME, MAN! I'VE  
NOT THAT VENUSSULA IN A  
CASE! IN ITS NATURAL  
HABITAT IN THE SOUTHERN  
SWAMPS OF NORTH AMERICA,  
IT WOULD NORMALLY TRAP  
FLIES IN ITS WEB!

IT'S  
REVOLTING!

DON'T BE SELF, SPURD!  
THAT'S NATURE! YOU KNOW,  
DOES EAT DOG! IN THIS  
CASE, IT'S SPIDER EAT FLY!  
THAT'S THE WAY IT SUR-  
VIVES! AND WE ALL  
STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE!  
WE'VE ALL GOT TO BE LIKE  
THAT SPIDER...IN A WAY!

PERHAPS...  
PERHAPS YOU'RE  
RIGHT, SIN!  
I...I NEVER  
THOUGHT OF  
IT THAT WAY!  
HMMM!

HANDOLPH SPURD FOLLOWED HIS EMPLOYER OUT OF THE GREENHOUSE INTO THE LUXURIOUS LIVING ROOM.

ALL RIGHT, SPURD!  
WHAT'S ON YOUR MIND?  
YOU INVITED YOUR-  
SELF HERE TONIGHT!  
WHAT'S UP?

WELL, SIR! I...I'VE  
NOTICED SOMETHING  
WRONG AT THE BANK.  
SOMETHING TERRIBLY  
WRONG!

OH? IT'S THE BOOKS, SIR! THEY DON'T  
BALANCE! IN FACT...I WOULD SAY  
SOMEONE IS...*STEARLING* FROM  
THE BANK, SIR! I CAME HERE TONIGHT  
TO...*ER...* WARN YOU! YOU SEE...I  
KNOW WHO THAT SOMEONE IS!

YOU...  
YOU  
DO?

YES, MR. STONEHAM!  
WHEN I FIRST CAME  
TONIGHT, I INTENDED  
TO LET YOU KNOW I  
KNEW ABOUT THE DIS-  
CREPANCY IN THE BOOKS  
SO THAT YOU COULD  
REPLACE THE MONEY  
AND NOTHING MORE  
WOULD BE SAID!

ARE  
YOU  
ACCUS-  
ING  
ME,  
SPURD?

BUT, AFTER HEAR-  
ING YOUR TALK  
TONIGHT...ABOUT  
SPIDER EAT FLY...  
DOE EAT DOE...I'VE  
DECIDED TO FORGET  
THAT I NOTICED  
ANYTHING WRONG.

OH?

FOR, SAY...FIVE  
THOUSAND DOLLARS!  
THAT ISN'T MUCH.  
MR. STONEHAM, COM-  
PARED TO FIFTY-  
TWO THOUSAND!

SO...IT'S BLACK-  
MAIL, IS IT? YOU  
WANT A PAYOFF,  
EH?

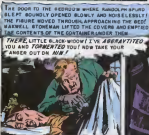
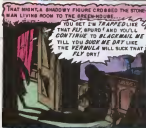
LET US CALL IT A  
STRUGGLE TO SURVIVE.  
SIR! YOU PAY ME...AND  
YOU SURVIVE! LIKE YOU  
SAID, SIR...IT'S NATURE!

THERE WAS A MOMENT OF SILENCE, AND THEN  
MAXWELL STONEHAM BEGAN TO LAUGH! HIS  
HOWLS OF MIRTH ECHOED THROUGH THE HOUSE.

HEH...HEH! ALL RIGHT,  
SPURD! YOU WIN! I'M  
PROMISED OF YOU! I  
DIDN'T THINK YOU  
HAD IT IN YOU! FIVE  
GRAND, EH? IT'S  
A DEAL!

AND EVERY-  
THING STAYS  
EXACTLY AS  
IT WAS! I  
KEEP MY JOB!  
THAT'S IN THE  
DEAL, TOO!





THE NEXT MORNING, THE POLICE CAME AN ANSWER TO MAXWELL STONEMAN'S 'FRANTIC' PHONECALL! THEY QUESTIONED MAX ABOUT RANDOLPH BRURO'S UNFORTUNATE DEATH! MAX WAS 'HEARTBROKEN'.

THE DOD SAYS A BLACK-WIDOW KILLED HIM. MR. STONEMAN! HAVE YOU ANY IDEA HOW THE SPIDER GOT OUT OF ITS CASE?

NO! I SHOWED MR. SPUD MY COLLECTION LAST NIGHT! PERHAPS THE CASE DOOR WAS LEFT OPEN!

THE POLICE INSPECTOR HAMMERED AWAY, BUT COULD PROVE NOTHING...

I INVITED HIM TO MY HOUSE SOONER! I DO THAT OFTEN FOR MY EMPLOYEES! I LIKE TO MAKE THEM FEEL I AM THEIR FRIEND AS WELL AS THEIR EMPLOYER!

DEAR, MR. STONEMAN! THAT'LL BE ALL! WRAP IT UP, BOYS! JUST AN ACCIDENT! THAT'S ALL!



BUT MAXWELL STONEMAN DIDN'T LIKE THE WAY THE POLICE INSPECTOR EYED HIM! MAX DECIDED IT MIGHT BE BETTER TO GET OUT OF THE STATE FOR A FEW MONTHS TILL THE INCIDENT WAS FORGOTTEN...

YOUR PLANE IS READY, MR. STONEMAN! GOING SOUTH?

YES, GEORGE! GOING TO BRAN FOR A FEW MONTHS!



MR. STONEMAN OWNED HIS OWN PLANE! HE WAS AN EXPERT PILOT, FLYING IT ALL OVER THE COUNTRY FOR BUSINESS AND PLEASURE! THE NEXT DAY, HIGH OVER GEORGIA...

COULD BE IN REACH IN TWO HOURS! THAT'S THE GREENHOCK SWAMP! DOWN THERE NOW! I...



SUDDENLY, THE ENGINE SPUTTERED AND DIED! THE PLANE BEGAN TO LOOSE ALTITUDE...

GOOD LORD! THE ENGINE'S GORGED OUT! I'M COMING DOWN!



MAX TUMBLED OUT OF THE TINY PLANE'S DOOR AS IT WENT INTO A SPIR! HIS CHUTE BUSHROOMED OPEN AND HE BEGAN TO FLOAT LADLY TOWARD THE FORE-BODDING SWAMP BELLO...

NOT A SIGN OF A ROAD OR A GARIN! I'M RIGHT OVER THE WORST SECTION OF THE GREENHOCK SWAMP! THE PART THAT NO MAN IS SUPPOSED TO BE ABLE TO FIND HIS WAY OUT OF!



MAX DROPPED INTO A THICKLY OVERGROWN SPOT! HIS CHUTE SNARLED IN A MOSS-LASHEN CYPRESS TREE AND HE HUNG HELPLESSLY, DANGLING ABOVE THE STAGNANT FOUL-SMELLING WATER.

I'VE GOT...TO...OUT MYSELF LOOSE! THANK GOODNESS I HAVE A KNIFE!



BARKER STONEMAN HACKED AWAY AT THE CHUTE CORDS UNTIL HE CUT HIMSELF FREE! HE PLUMBED DOWNWARD TOWARD THE SWAMP SURFACE! SUDDENLY—

MAX LOOKED AROUND! HE SEEMED TO BE LYING UPON SOME SORT OF HUGE NET! HE STRUGGLED TO FREE HIMSELF.

WHAT THE...? I'VE FALLEN INTO SOMETHING!

THE NET! IT'S ALL STUCK! IT'S LIKE A... A HUGE SPIDER WEB!

THE MORE MAXWELL STONEMAN TRIED TO ESCAPE THE MORE HOPELESSLY ENTAILED HE BECAME! SUDDENLY A MOVEMENT CAUGHT MAX'S EYE! A HUGE HAIRY SHAPE LOOMED UP, BEFORE HIM.

THE DISGUSTING THING SPRAWLED AT MAX, DIPPING ITS DRIPPING FANGS IN HIS CHEST! HE FELT A SHRILLING CHILL CREEP OVER HIS BODY! THEN THE GIANTIC SPIDER BEGAN TO COVER HIM WITH ITS WILLY WHITE SPINNINGS.

OH, NO! NO! A VERMULA SPIDER!

HE-E-E-L-P-P!

I... I'M PARALYZED! I CAN'T MOVE! THE VERMULA! IT'S... IT'S HEAVING ITS GIGGON AROUND ME!

WHEN THE WRECKAGE OF BARKER STONEMAN'S PLANE WAS SPOTTED BY AN AIRLINE PILOT DEEP IN THE HEART OF THE OKEFENOKEE SWAMP, HELICOPTERS BROUGHT A SEARCHING PARTY IN! THEY FINALLY FOUND HIM... OR WHAT WAS LEFT OF HIM.

HE... HE SEEMS TO BE COVERED WITH SOME SORT OF SILLY WHITE STUFF!

PROBABLY WHAT'S LEFT OF HIS CHUTE!

HE'S NOTHING BUT A DRIED-UP SNELL! ALL OF HIS FLESH AND GUTS SEEMS TO HAVE BEEN SUCKED OUT OF HIS BODY!

ARTS!

ARTS, NOTHING! HEE, HEE! MAXIE TELLERD ONCE! BEFORE THAT SPIDER GOT THROUGH WITH HIM! WHAT? YOU DOUBT THAT A VERMULA SPIDER THAT SIZE EXISTS IN THE OKEFENOKEE? WOULD YOU LIKE TO TAKE A TRIP DOWN THERE WITH ME SOMETIME... AND SEE? HEE, HEE! I'LL LET YOU TALK TO AN OLD BUDE DOWN THERE! HE'LL TELL YOU ABOUT THE TIME HE WAS OUT HUNTING QUACK AND SPIED 'EM! YES, NOW! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THAT RASPY THE WALK OF HORROR!



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GLAD CRYPT #1



GLAD CRYPT #2



GLAD CRYPT #3



GLAD CRYPT #4



GLAD CRYPT #5



GLAD CRYPT #6



GLAD VAULT #1



GLAD VAULT #2



GLAD VAULT #3



GLAD VAULT #4



GLAD VAULT #5



GLAD VAULT #6



GLAD WEIRD #1



GLAD WEIRD #2



GLAD WEIRD #3



GLAD WEIRD #4



GLAD HAUNT #1



GLAD HAUNT #2

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THRILLER

# TALES: FROM THE CRYPT



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! BACK AGAIN, EAT BACK FOR MORE CHILLS AND SHIVERS? WELL, COME IN! WELCOME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR AND I'LL GIVE YOU OUT YOUR SHARE! YEP! IT'S ME, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, YOUR MOST FRIGHTENING HORROR! JUST SIT YOURSELF DOWN ON THAT FOGG-SWELLING, EARTHENWARE URM OVER THERE, AND I'LL ENTERTAIN YOU WHATEVER IN THE GORY ON THAT'S WHAT'S LEFT OF WHITTY WHITTAKER? WHO'S HE? WELL, YOU JUST SETTLE DOWN AND I'LL LET YOU HEAR WHITTY'S STORY IN HIS VERY OWN HORROR! READY? WHITTY CALLS THIS GABBERING CREATION...

## GAS-TLY PROSPECTS!



JEFF WHITTAKER'S MY HANDLE! THOUGH SOME OF THE BOYS FROM THE WAGON TRAIN I'D JOINED UP WITH TO COME WEST TO CALIFORNIA HAD NICKNAMED ME 'WHITTY' 'CAUSE I WAS SO CHICKEN, AND MY NAME TURNED GRAY-WHITE LONG YEARS BEFORE! BUT I'D BEEN A PROSPECTIN' POOL ALL WIFE, AN WHEN THEY FOUND THE RICHER STUFF OVER AT SUTTER'S SAW MILL IN 1848, I PACKED MY ODDS AN HEADED WEST WITH THE REST OF THE FORTY-NINERS...

WAL, WHITTY! WE'LL BE IN CALIFORNIA BY THIS TIME. NEXT WEEK, WHAT'S YOUR PLANS?

ME? I'M HEADIN' RIGHT FOR THEM GOLD FIELDS! GONNA STAKE ME OUT A CLAIM AN MAKE A FORTUNE!





YEP! THERE WERE MY PLANS! I HAD LOTS O' HIGH HOPES IN THEM DAYS! SOON AS WE HIT SACRAMENTO, I LET OUT UP THE VALLEY—KEEP GOING, STRANGER! TRY THIS LAND'S ALL STAGED OUT!



WOULDN'T TAKE ME LONG FIND OUT THAT MOST O' THE GOLD'D BEEN PLAYED OUT BY THE TIME THAT I GOT THERE! YELLER-HUNNERY CHITTERS'D TAKEN CLIPPED SHIPS 'ROUND THE CAPE O' GOOD HOPE AN' BEATED US OVER-LANDERS TO THE FIELDS...



FINALLY! I DECIDED TO TRY UP IN THE HILLS! I'D HEARD TALK ABOUT HIGH YIELDS NEW' FOUND! I BOUNT ME A BUNCH O' BOYS I COULD HUNT BY OWN WITTLES, A PICK-AGE AN' A SHAKEL I'D BIL WITH, AN' SOME CANNED BEANS! SPENT EVERY LAST DIME I OWNED...



LE'ME TELL YOU, THAT'S BEAUTIFUL COUNTRY, THEM CALIFORNIA HILLS! TOMORROW MORN' PINES WHISPERIN' OVERHEAD! BUSHIN' STREAMS CASCADIN' OVER ROCKS! QUIET LAKES LAYIN' LIKE LOOKIN'-GLASSES! I PYOTED ME A TENT NEXT TO ONE O' THEM DART LAKES AND MADE ME A CAMP...



IT WERE GOLD ALL RIGHT! AND LOONEY, WHAT A HIGH DEPOSIT! THAT THERE STREAM MUSTA BEEN HOLLIN' THEM RUBBETS DOWN FROM THE HILLS SINCE TIME BEGUN... AN' THEY WERE ALL LAYIN' RIGHT THERE FOR ME...



I TRIED A FEW SPOTS WITHOUT MUCH SUCCESS! THEN I FOUND ME A STREAM FLOWIN' INTO THE LAKE! SHE WAS A FAST-RUNNIN' STREAM—A-COMIN' DOWN FROM THEM HILLS AND A-BUBBLIN' OUT INTO THE QUIET LAKE... STREAM! IT ALL UP 'ROUND THE SPOT.



SO I STARTED PANNIN'! I FIGURED ON CLEANIN' OUT THE MOUTH O' THE STREAM WHERE SHE EMPTIED INTO THE LAKE... THEN WORKIN' MY WAY UP-STREAM TILL I'D PLAYED THE STRIKE OUT...



THEN, 'BOUT A MONTH AFTER I'D STARTED WORKIN' BY CLAIN, IT HAPPENED. THIS BIG BURLY-LOOKIN' CRITTER SHOWS UP? I'D PAID HIM ME 'BOUT FOUR THOUSAND DOLLARS WORTH O' GOLD BY THAT TIME AN' WAS FEELIN' PRETTY GOOD. THAT WAS WHERE I MADE MY BIG MISTAKE? I GUESS HE'D BEEN SPIN' ON ME...AN' I LET HIM GET TOO CLOSE.



THE TWO RED-HOT LEAD SLUGS CAUCH ME IN THE BUTT AN' I REEL OVER! THE PAIN IS SOMETHIN' AWFUL, AN' I'M BEIN' MAD! WHEN HE COMES OVER TO SEE IF I'M DONE FOR, I KICK OUT AT HIM! HIS COLT GOES FLYIN'.



I KEEP GOIN', EVEN THOUGH THE PAIN IS BLUIN' ME! BACK O' ME, I HEAR HIM SHOUT WHEN HE SPIES ME 'GON'.



A BLUE WHISTLER PAST MY EAR AS I TUMBLE INTO CAMP! I GRAB MY SHOTSUM AND THE BOX O' SHELLS, OVER BEHIND A ROCK, AN' LET GO WITH BOTH BARRELS.



HE WHIPS OUT HIS COLT 'N' ASS PAINS IT THREE BEFORE I KNOW WHAT HAPPENS...



THE GUN LANDS OFF IN THE BRUSH AND THE BURLY GUY DIVES AFTER IT? I SEES MY CHANCE AND, GETTIN' T'WY FEET, HOO-TAILS IT FOR CAMP.



THE BURLY CRITTER MUSTA CAUGHT THE BURLIEST BLIST ON THE SHOTSUM BARREL, 'CAUSE HE'S BEHIND A TREE WHEN THE BUCKSHOT PEPPERS 'ROUND HIM.



SO WE SIT THERE HIM BEHIND THE BIG OL' PINE, AND ME CRO. ON INS BEHIND THAT ROCK, BLEEDIN' LIKE A LEAKY WATER BAG.

ONE OF US HAS NOT TO FALL ASLEEP, AN' I AINT TIRED!

OH, LONGER IF HE DON'T GET ME, I'LL BLEED TO DEATH!



I STUFF THE SHOTGUN SHELLS FROM THE BOX INTO MY POCKETS AND SIT BACK TO WAIT! I KNOW I'M GONNA TO DIE, BUT I AINT GONNA LET HIM LIVE EITHER...

YOU'LL NEVER TAKE JACK CLARK, YUN SHANE! I'LL GET YUN FIRST! I SWEAR IT!

I'M WAITIN', OL' TIMER!



I GUESS I MUSTA PASSED OUT FROM THE PAIN, 'CAUSE THE NEXT THING I KNOW, MY EYES POP OPEN AND HE'S STANDIN' OVER ME WITH A KNIFE.

THAT'LL TEACH YUN NOT TO FALL ASLEEP!



I'M GRIMIN' AT HIM, AND HE'S STARRIN' BACK AT ME! THE KNIFE IS DRAININ' BLOOD! I TRY TO GRAB FOR MY GUN, BUT I CAN'T MOVE A MUSCLE! FUNNY, BUT I DON'T FEEL ANY PAIN, EITHER! SO I KNOWS THAT I'M DEAD...

STOP GRIMIN' AT ME, YUN OLD COOT!



BUT I JUST KEEP GRIMIN'! HE SPITS AT ME, AN BOGS AN GETS MY POK-ASS AN' SHOVES.

I'M GONNA JURY YUN, YUN OLD BEETTER! THEN I'M GONNA FINISH WORTHIN' YER CLAIM! ONLY NOW, IT'S MY CLAIM!



SO HE STARTS GRIN'! THE GROUND IS HARD AND HE CURSES A LOT! I JUST KEEP GRIMIN' AT HIM! HE'S GETTIN' MADDEN AND MADDEN.

AH, TO DECK WITH IT! SHE IS GOOD ENOUGH!



HE GRABS ME AND DRAGS ME OVER TO THE SHALLOW GRAVE HE'S DUG OUT OF THE ROCKY LOAM! HE KINGS ME IN.

THERE! REST IN PEACE, YUN OLD PRANK-DOO!



SO I ROLL INTO THE GRAVE AND LAND FACE UP  
STAYIN' AT HIM AND GRINNIN' AT HIM! AND HE'S RED  
AS A BEET, HE'S SO MAD! HE TELLS AT ME AND  
PLUNGES A SHOVEL-FULL OF DIRT INTO MY FACE...

STOP STAYIN' AT ME! STOP  
GRINNIN' AT ME! SHUT  
YOUR EYES WHEN YEN  
DEAD! CLOSE YER  
MOUTH!



FORTY SOON I'M ALL COVERED, AN' LAYIN' NICE AN'  
COZY IN MY GRAVE! I HEAR HIS HOR-NALED BOOTS  
CRUNCHIN' AROUND OVER ME AS HE STAMPS THE  
GROUND DOWN HARD. SO'S IT MOST LOSE FRESH  
BUR-...

HEH, HEH! YOU WERE WRONG,  
OH, OLD TIMERS! I GOT YOU  
FIRST, AFTER ALL!



I FIGURE I LAY THERE A WEEK OR  
SO IN THE SAGDUN! THE CRAWLIN'  
THINGS START WORKIN' ON ME! I  
I DON'T FEEL 'EM, BUT I KNOW  
THEY'RE THERE 'CAUSE I CAN HEAR  
'EM SCRATCHIN' AROUND ME! THEN,  
AFTER A LONG TIME, I HEAR  
SOMETHIN' UP ABOVE, CLAWIN'  
AT THE GROUND...



IT'S A WILD CAT GRABIN' ME UP!  
IT CLEARS THE SOO OFF'S MY  
FACE AND SHOULDER, BRASS  
MY COLLAR BETWEEN ITS PANGS,  
AND PULLS ME UP TO A SITTHIN'  
POSITION...



THEN, AFORE IT KIN START WIPIN'  
ME TO SHREDS, ANOTHER WILD CAT  
SHOWS UP...



RIGHT AWAY THEY START SPITTIN' AND HOWLIN' AT  
EACH OTHER! I SIT THERE, GRINNIN' AT THEM



THEY BAIL INTO ONE ANOTHER, BUT SOON THE ONE  
THEY DUG ME UP GOES OFF A-SCREECHIN' AND  
A-BURNIN' HIS WOUNDS! THEN THE LATECOMER WHU'  
WON COMES OVER, SNIPPS AT ME, AND LOSES OFF  
HIMSELF! I GUESS I'M TOO FAR SORE TO MAKE  
GOOD EATIN' ANYMORE...



SO I SIT THERE STARK AT MY  
TENT, LISTENIN' TO THE BURLY  
GUY'S SNORIN'. HE SLEEPS RIGHT  
THROUGH THE MELT.



IN THE MORNING, HE COMES OUT  
OF THE TENT. FOR A MINUTE I  
THINK HIS EYES IS SOAKIN' FLY  
RIGHT OUTTA HIS HAIR...



GOOD LORD!

HE COMES OVER TO ME, LOOKIN' A  
LITTLE GREEN AROUND THE EARS.  
HIS MOUTH IS DRIBBLIN' A LITTLE  
SPITTLE, LIKE HE'S BEEN SUCKIN'  
ON A BAR O' SOAP.



IS IT AINT NATURAL? LAY  
DOWN! YOU'RE DEAD!

BUT I JUST SIT THERE GAWPIN' AT HIM! I CAN  
TELL HE'S GETTIN' SOME 'CAUSE HIS EYES IS RED-  
DENIN' UP! HE HAULS OFF AND KICKS ME IN THE  
FACE, AND I FLOPS BACKWARDS INTO MY SHALLOW  
GRAVE.



DO YOU WANT STAY BURIED, EN,  
YOU BLASTED OLD BEER?

HE SCRAMBLES OFF TOWARD THE TENT AN' COMES  
BACK WITH THE PICK-AXE AN' SHOVEL. HE GRABS  
HOLD OF ME AND CRASS ME DOWN T' THE LAKE.



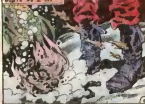
WELL, WE'LL SEE  
IF YOU'LL STAY IN  
THE WATER!

HE TIES THE SHOVEL AN' THE PICK-AXE T' MY  
FEET WITH SOME ROPE.



THEY'LL WEIGHT YOU DOWN  
SO YOU STAY DEEP!

THEN HE HAULS ME INTO THE LAKE! HE PULLS ME  
OUT AS DEEP AS HE CAN SO AN' LETS ME SETTLE  
TO THE BOTTOM! I SHIP AT HIS HOB-NAILED  
BOOTS AS I HIT



THE WATER STARTS FILLIN' INTO MY GUTS. AN  
BURGLIN' INTO MY LUNGS! SOME NOBBY FISH DOOME  
'ROUND...PEERIN' AT ME! ONE OF 'EM TAKES A BIP  
AT MY HAND! I SWAY BACK AND FORTH LAZILY...



WHERE THE RUSSIN STREAM EMPTIED INTO THE LAKE,  
A SADDY CURRENT SWIRL! I'M LAYIN' RIGHT SNACK IN  
THE MIDDLE OF IT! PRETTY SOON, I'M TURNIN' AND  
TWISTIN', AND THE ROPES IS RUSSIN' ON THE SHARP  
EDGES OF THE SHOCKS...



IT TAKES ABOUT A WEEK FOR THE ROPES TO SAW  
THROUGH! MEANWHILE THE FISH HAVE BEEN PECKIN'  
MEET... AND BY THE TIME I'M OUT FREE, I'M IN PRETTY  
BAD SHAPE! I'M ALL WATER-LOGGED AND EULATED,  
AND THE SADDIES THAT HAVE FORMED IN MY INSIDES  
FORCE ME TO THE SURFACE...



I GUESS THOSE CRAZY CURRENTS MUSTA DRAGGED  
ME 'ROUND AND 'ROUND, 'CAUSE I POP UP RIGHT AT  
THE MOUTH OF THE STREAM WHERE SUAST-BOY IS  
PANNIN'! HE NEARLY FALLE IN THE WATER WHEN  
HE SPOTS ME...



HE STARTS YELLIN' AND SCREAMIN'  
AT ME, BUT I JUST STARE AT HIM  
HIM AND GRIN REAL BILLY-LIKE!  
ONLY I DON'T LOOK TOO JOYFUL!  
ANYWAY! FACT IS I CAN'T PRETTY  
BAD POP! AT LEAST THAT'S WHAT  
HE COMPLAINS OF AS HE GRABS ME  
ARMORE...



HE LUNGES ME OVER TO THE CLEAN  
ING AND LAYS ME IN THE MIDDLE!  
THEN HE STARTS SWAGGIN' OVER  
LOOS HE'S BEEN COLLECTIN'...



I GUESS HE WAS GETTIN' READY TO  
BUILD HIMSELF A CABIN WITH THEM  
LOSS AND STAY OVER THE WINTER!  
ANYWAY HE DECIDES TO SACRIFICE  
'EM ALL FOR ME! HE TOSSES ME  
ON THE FIRE...



I'M LAYIN' THERE ON THE FLE OF LOSS IN THE MIDDLE O' THE CLEARIN'! ALL AROUND THE BRUSH IS DRY, 'CAUSE IT'S BEEN A DRY SUMMER! RIGHT AWAY, THE FLAMES ARE LEAPIN' TOWARD ME...



THERE'S A TERRIFIC BOOM... AND I BLOW OFF! THE SHOT-GUN SHELLS I'D PACKED INTO MY POCKETS GO OFF LIKE A DYNAMITE CHARGE! I RIP INTO A THOUSAND PIECES, AND THE EXPANDING GASES AND COMPRESSED STEAM INSIDE ME SENDS THE FLAMIN' WINGS FLYIN' THROUGH THE AIR...



WHA! A FIRE I START! IN A COUPLE O' MINUTES, THE WHOLE CLEARIN' IS SURROUNDED BY A CIRCLE OF FLAME. A WHITE HOT WALL GOVIN' HIGH THE BURLY CRITTER! HE DON'T STAND A CHANCE O' GETTIN' THROUGH IT! TANT LONG 'TIL HE STARTS SHRIVELIN' UP PAW...



THE HEAT IS TERRIFIC! OF COURSE, I DON'T FEEL NOthin', BUT I CAN HEAR MY WATER-LOGGED BODY A-WHISH' AND A-PONCH! I GUESS I BLACKENED UP A BIT, AND THE WATER IN MY ROTTED CLOTHES OBIES OUT! SOON THEY START TO BURN! I AM SURE SOMETHIN' STRANGE GOIN' ON INSIDE ME... LIKE I'M EXPLODIN' FROM THE STEAM AND GASES! THE...



SOME OF 'EM LANDS ON THE BURLY GUY, AND HE'S SO BUSY FEELIN' ME OFF N HIM AND PATTIN OUT HIS BURNIN' CLOTHES THAT HE DON'T NOTICE I'VE ALSO LANDED ALL AROUND THE EDGE OF THE CLEARIN'... IN THE DRY BRUSH... IN THE T-MOOR-LIKE PINES... EVERYWHERE.



HEH, HEH! YOU PLUMB MAKE, WHITEY! AND IT SHOW WAR A... AHEH... IT BURE WAS A DOOTY OF A TALE, EH, KID-DEST? YOU KNOW, WHEN I FIRST TOLD THIS YARN TO MY IDLEST EDITORS, THEY CONFESSED THAT THEY NEVER KNEW A CORPSE COULD WRITE HIS OWN STORY! I STRAIGHTENED THEM OUT, THOUGH! WHITEY COULDN'T WRITE HIS OWN

NAME I'VE OUTPASTED THE WHOLE THING TO ME! HEH, HEH! A REAL GHOST WRITER, EH? WELL, NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE KNUT-KEEPER! I'LL SEE YOU LATER ON!



...BUT AFTER A WHILE IT'S QUIET... 'CEPT FOR THE CRAGGLIN' OF THE FIRE AS IT SWEEPS ON THROUGH THE DRY WOODED HILLS! I GUESS I CAN REST EASY NOW! I PLUMB FINISHED MY WORK!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

GREETINGS, BONY BRAVE-SHOULDS! IT'S ME, THE VAULT-KEEPER, AGAIN! TIME TO QUEST-SPOT THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S MAGICAL MERE! SO BRAG YOUR BATTERED BODIES INTO THE VAULT AND STRETCH THEM OUT ON THAT CASE OF ICE OVER THERE! IT'LL KEEP YOU COOL...WHICH IS THE PROPER MOOD FOR THIS CHILLING TALE OF ICE, SNOW, AND HOT LOVE I CALL...

## A Hollywood Ending!



HUGH HOWARDS, FAMOUS HOLLYWOOD MOVIE PRODUCER AND CELEBRATED SPORTSMAN AND WORLD TRAVELER, GUIDED HIS PRIVATE TRANSPORT PLANE LOW OVER THE GLARING ICE-FIELDS OF THE FROZEN NORTH.

"THERE'S AN AWESOME  
SETTLEMENT...DOWN  
THERE, MR. HOWARDS!"

ALL RIGHT, EVANS! TELL  
THE PUBLICITY BOYS TO  
FASTEN THEIR SAFETY  
BELTS! WE'RE GOING IN!





DOWN BELOW THE BLEAKING AIRPLANE! FUR-CLAD FIGURES  
PANTED FROM THEIR HIGHS, WAVING AND CHATTERING...



THEY SEE  
US!

THERE'S A LEVEL SPOT...  
CAST OF THE SETTLEMENT!  
I'M GOING TO BRING 'EM  
DOWN ON IT!

SOON THE SKY-BIANT'S SKI-RUNNERS  
TOUCHED THE SURFACE OF THE CHOSEN  
ICEY EXPANSE AND CAME TO A STOP! THE  
DRUMS BEATING POPULATION ERUPTED  
ABOUT THE PLANE...



WELL! C'MON YOU BUYS!  
LET'S GET SOME FUR  
POWER AND GET OUT  
OF HERE!

YEE.  
MR.  
HOWARDS!

OHAY,  
MR.

MR. HOWARDS STEPPED FROM  
THE PLANE AND ADDRESSED THE  
GATHERED ARCTIC INHABITANTS...



ANYBODY  
HERE SPEAK  
ENGLISH?

I I  
SPEAK  
ENGLISH!

MR. HOWARDS TURNED TO THE  
FUR-CLAD FIGURE THAT STEPPED  
FORWARD THROUGH THE CROWD!  
IT WAS A GIRL...



GOOD! MY NAME  
IS HOWARDS! HUSH  
HOWARDS! I'M A  
HOLLYWOOD PROD-  
UCTION! YOU'RE  
NOT AN Eskimo!

NO, MR.  
HOWARDS!  
I AM AN  
AMERICAN!

THE GIRL SMILED AT HUSH! HER  
EYES SPARKLED! SHE WAS  
BEAUTIFUL!



WHAT ARE  
YOU DOING  
IN THE SOO-  
FORSAKEN  
PLACE?

I LIVE HERE  
WITH THESE  
PEOPLE! THAT  
WOODEN BUILDING  
IS MY HOME! MY  
GUARDIAN BROUGHT  
ME HERE SIX  
YEARS AGO!

HUGH STUDIED THE ATTRACTIVE GIRL STANDING  
BEFORE HIM! HE'D NEVER SEEN A MORE PHOTO-  
GENIC FACE...



YOU SAY YOU LIVE  
THERE IN THAT SHACK?  
IS IT HEATED?

WHY, YEE! THERE'S AN  
OIL STOVE IN IT! WHAT  
WAKES YOU ASK?

HUGH TOOK THE GIRL'S HITTENED HAND AND  
STARTED TOWARD THE SNOW-LADEN FRAME  
BUILDING...



C'MON! I WANT TO  
TAKE A LOOK AT YOUR  
FRAME!

MY FRAME? WELL,  
REALLY NOW, MR.  
HOWARDS...?



LOOK! DON'T GET IN A HUFF! I'M A HOLLYWOOD PRODUCER! THIS IS STRICTLY BUSINESS! IF YOU'RE NOT WHAT IT TAKES, I CAN MAKE A STAR OUT OF YOU!

A...A START WHAT? THAT?



HUNT HOW LONG DID YOU SAY YOU'VE BEEN UP HERE?

SIX YEARS! 'DADDY'... THAT'S MY GUARDIAN... DOCTOR WHEENE... BROUGHT ME HERE AFTER THE ACCIDENT!



ACCIDENT? YES! MY REAL FATHER AND I WERE IN AN AUTO ACCIDENT! FATHER WAS DOCTOR WHEENE'S COLLABORATOR! FATHER WAS KILLED! I LOST MY MEMORY. I DON'T EVEN REMEMBER WHAT MY FATHER LOOKED LIKE!



JAMIESA, HUNT!

I GUESS NOT! ANYWAY, 'DADDY' BROUGHT ME HERE! HE HAD TO TEACH ME ALL OVER AGAIN! I'D FORGOTTEN EVERYTHING! I'D EVEN FORGOTTEN HOW TO WALK AND TALK! IT WAS AWFUL! BUT 'DADDY' WAS PATIENT, AND I LEARNED QUICKLY.



THEN YOU REALLY DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT MOVIES OR MOVIE STARS?

I'M AFRAID NOT, MR. HOWARD! BUT LOOK... WE'D BETTER TAKE OFF OUR APRONS NOW THAT WE'RE INSIDERS!



THE GIRL SLIPPED OUT OF HER HOODED PARKA AND PULLED OFF HER FUR PARTS! HUSH QUICKLY! FOLLOWED HER EXAMPLE! FINALLY SHE STOOD BEFORE HIM CLAD ONLY IN A SIMPLE SWEATER AND SLACKS.

TERRIFIC! TERRIFIC! WHAT'S YOUR NAME?

TERRY! IT'S SHORT FOR THERESA! TERRY AALEN!



YOU'RE A SWEET KID, TERRY! IT'S LIKE TO HELP YOU! WHERE IS YOUR GUARDIAN... THIS DOCTOR WHEENE? I WANT TO ASK HIM PERMISSION TO TAKE YOU TO HOLLYWOOD!

HE... HE'S NEVER LET ME GO! HE'S FORBIDDEN ME TO EVER LEAVE THE SETTLEMENT! BUT... IF YOU WISH, YOU MAY ASK HIM! HE'S AT THE TRADING POST! HE'LL BE BACK IN TWO DAYS!

TWO DAYS LATER, THE SHINING PRIVATE AIR-TRANSPORT STILL SAT ON THE OPEN ICE-FIELD OUTSIDE THE SETTLEMENT. HUGH HOWARDS HAD STAYED WAITING FOR DOCTOR WHEEDS TO RETURN BY DOG-SLED FROM THE DISTANT TRADING-POST.

LOOK HERE, EVANS? WHEN IN GLAZES ARE WE LEAVING THIS FROSTY HOLE? IT'S BEEN TWO DAYS! I GOT A WIFE AND KIDS!

SORRY, BOYS! MR. HOWARDS HAS BUSINESS HERE!

YEAH! BUSINESS WITH THAT GARDY'S SEEN 'EM TOGETHER!



HUGH CAUGHT TERRY IN HIS ARM!



OH, HUGH! WHEN?



AND ARE YOU SURE, TERRY?

THE FLU-GLAD DOCTOR STAMPEDED INTO THE BOOM..

GET OUT! LEAVE HER ALONE! GET OUT OF MY HOUSE!

WELL, DADDY! YOU DON'T UNDERSTAND! HUGH WANTS TO MARRY ME AND TAKE ME TO HOLLYWOOD!

THAT'S RIGHT, SIR!



INDEED THEY HAD BEEN TOGETHER... ALMOST EVERY CHANCE THEY COULD! THERE WAS SOMETHING ABOUT TERRY. SOMETHING HUGH NEVER FELT ABOUT A GIRL BEFORE...

I'M IN LOVE WITH YOU, TERRY! I NEED YOU! YOU'VE GOT TO COME BACK TO THE STATES WITH ME! I WANT TO MARRY YOU!

OH, HUGH! DO YOU MEAN IT? I'VE NEVER BEEN IN LOVE BEFORE! HOW CAN I BE SURE?



SUDDENLY A BLAST OF ICEY WIND SWIFT THROUGH THE BOOM AS THE DOOR WAS FLUNG OPEN...

TAKE YOUR HANDS OFF HER!

HUGH! I'VE BEEN DADDY!



NEVER! I FORBID IT! YOU'RE NOT LEAVING, TERRY! YOU'RE STAYING HERE WITH ME!

BUT DOCTOR! I LOVE TERRY! I CAN GIVE HIM SO MUCH!

HUGH WANTS TO MAKE A MOVIE-STAR OUT OF ME! HE'S A PRODUCER!





YES! I'VE  
HEARD OF  
YOU, MR.  
HOWARD!  
YOU'RE UP  
HERE ON A  
PUBLICITY  
STUNT! IS  
TERRY GOING  
TO BE ONE OF  
YOUR PUBLICITY  
GALS? YOU BET  
I'LL GO!

OH, MR.  
IF THAT'S  
THE WAY  
YOU FEEL  
ABOUT  
IT...

HUSH!  
HUSH!  
HUSH!



TERRY DARTED AFTER HUSH!  
HAD SNATCHED HIS PUR-PORT AND  
STARTED OUT OF THE DOOR...

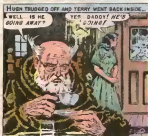
YOU, YOU'RE NOT... I'VE GOT TO  
GO! YES, ARE  
YOU, DARLING?

YOU REALLY  
LOVE ME, AND  
YOU WANT TO  
COME WITH  
ME...



MEET ME AT  
THE PLANE IN AN  
HOUR!

I'LL... I'LL  
BE THERE!  
I'LL BE THERE!



HUSH TRUGGED OFF AND TERRY WENT BACK INSIDE...

WELL, IS HE  
GOING AWAY?

YES, DADDY! HE'S  
GOING!



EXHAUSTED FROM HIS TRIP, DOCTOR WHEELS LAY  
DOWN TO REST AND FELL ASLEEP! WHEN HE AWOKE  
AN HOUR LATER...

TERRY! I HEARD A... TERRY!  
TERRY! WHERE  
ARE YOU?



THE ROAR OF AN AIRPLANE REVERBERATED OVER  
THE FROZEN WASTES! HIGH ABOVE THE TINY EXHIBIT  
SETTLEMENT, TERRY SAT BESIDE HUSH IN THE COCK-  
PIT OF THE HUGE TRANSPORT...

OH, HUSH! I'M SO, SO  
STARTED! IF ONLY I'D  
HAD DADDY'S PERMISSION  
TO GO... INSTEAD OF  
HAVING HAD TO  
SNEAK AWAY!

DON'T WORRY, TERRY!  
HELL GET OVER IT!  
YOU DESERVE A  
LITTLE HAPPINESS  
AFTER THESE LAST  
SIX YEARS!



AS HUSH HOWARD'S PRIMATE AIRLINER DISAPPEARED  
INTO THE ARCTIC BLUES, DOCTOR WHEELS HASTILY  
NITCHED UP HIS DOG-TEAM...

IF I CAN GET TO THE TRADING  
POST AND CATCH THE (BOY) KUP  
MAN-PAKETS, I MAY BE ABLE  
TO GET THERE IN TIME!  
MUSH!

HEH, HEH! SO HUGH-SPIRITED  
TERRY OUT OF THE COLD-  
COUNTRY TO THE LAND OF  
PALM TREES AND RIVER LIGHTS...  
HOLLYWOOD! THEY WERE  
MARRIED AS SOON AS THEY  
ARRIVED, AND THE FILM  
COLONY WENT WILD OVER  
THE PRODUCER'S NEW BRIDE  
AND FUTURE STAR! SCREEN  
TESTS WERE MADE, A  
SCRIPT WAS CHOSEN, AND  
SHOOTING BEGAN.



ALL WENT WELL FOR A FEW  
WEEKS! THEN, THE MAKE-UP  
MAN CAME TO SEE HUGH...

I GET... I GET EES  
ABOUT YOUR *NOSE*.  
WHEW! HOWARD!  
SHE EES A COMELY  
WOMAN... BUT HER  
SKIN LATELY...  
WELL...



SPEAK UP,  
MARKEL!  
WHAT IS  
IT?

I HAD TROUBLE  
LATELY, HUGH!  
SHE IS *HARRASD*!  
HER SKIN EES *OFF*  
*CRACKING*! I  
CANNOT DO ANY-  
THING WITH  
EET!

I... I  
HARDLY  
NOTICED!  
I'LL SPEAK  
TO HER!



THAT NIGHT, HUGH TOLD TERRY ABOUT THE MAKE-  
UP MAN'S COMPLAINT.

WHAT IS IT, DEAR?  
AREN'T YOU BETTING  
ENOUGH *HEST*?  
AM I *WORKING*  
YOU TOO HARD?

I DON'T KNOW, HUGH!  
I HAVEN'T BEEN *FEEL-*  
*ING* WELL! I *AM*  
*ILL*!



THE NEXT DAY, TERRY DIDN'T SHOW UP AT THE  
STUDIO! HUGH RETURNED TO THEIR PALATIAL  
RESIDENT WELLS HOME TO PATCH HER...

TERRY! WHAT'S *WROG*?  
WHY ARE YOU WEARING  
THOSE *SLONGS*... AND  
THAT *REN*?

SOMETHING'S  
WRONG, HUGH! SOME-  
THING'S *TERIBLY*  
WRONG! BUT I *WILL*  
GET OVER IT!



HOWEVER, TERRY *DIDN'T* GET OVER IT! IN FACT,  
STRANGER THINGS BEGAN TO HAPPEN...

LORD, HONEY! WHY  
SO MUCH *PERFUME*?  
YOU *REEK* FROM IT!

OH, HUGH! *MOON*!  
I NEVER SHOULD  
HAVE COME TO  
HOLLYWOOD!



IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED, TERRY LOCKED  
HERSELF IN HER ROOM, REFUSING TO COME OUT!  
SHE SHOWED HER FOOD SENT UP AND LEFT OUT-  
SIDE HER DOOR.

TERRY! YOU'VE GOT  
TO LET ME IN! TERRY!  
PLEASE! I'LL GET  
A DOCTOR!

IT'S *TOO LATE*.  
HONEY! SO *AWAY*!  
LEAVE... ME...  
ALONE!



AND THEN DOCTOR WHEEDS ARRIVED! HE'D TRAVELED BY DOG- sled, MAIL-PACKET, TRAIN, AND PLANE TO GET TO THE HOWARDS HOME...

DOCTOR WHEEDS: "WHERE IS SHE, HOWARDS? I'VE GOT TO TAKE HER BACK BEFORE IT'S TOO LATE! YOU MIGHT SHOULD HAVE TAKEN HER HOME!"



SHE'S UP IN HER ROOM, DOCTOR! SHE REFUSED TO SEE ANYONE! THERE'S SOMETHING WRONG WITH HER! FIRST MY MAKE-UP MAN COMPLAINED ABOUT HER JAZZ, THEN SHE STARTED WEARING GLOVES AND A FEEL! NOW, SHE'S DECIDED HERSELF! HER VOICE SOUNDED SO STRANGE! TODAY, SHE EVEN REFUSED TO ANSWER ME WHEN I CALLED!



THEN IT... IT IS TOO LATE! TAKE ME TO HER!



WHAT IS IT, DOCTOR? TELL ME! HER FATHER, PROFESSOR ARLEN, AND MYSELF WERE COLLABORATING ON A SCIENTIFIC EXPERIMENT WHEN THE ACCIDENT OCCURRED! WITH HIS DYING BREATH ARLEN BEHEADED ME TO TRY OUR NEW PROCESS ON TERRY!



THE ACCIDENT HAPPENED ON THE HIGHWAY JUST OUTSIDE MY LABORATORY! WE WORKED WITH MONKEYS, BUT FOUND THAT EVEN THOUGH WE REVIVED THEM AFTER THEY'D BEEN A FEW MINUTES DEAD, THEY CONTINUED TO DEGRAD! GOLD WAS THE ONLY ANSWER! GOLD... TO PRESERVE THEM!

YOU REVIVED THEN AFTER DEATH?



YES, MR. HOWARDS! TERRY ARLEN WAS DEAD! I REVIVED HER! THAT WAS THE EXPERIMENT PROFESSOR ARLEN AND I HAD BEEN WORKING ON! I RUSHED HER TO THAT ANESTHETIC TO KEEP HER FROM DETERIORATING! I HAD TO TEACH HER EVERYTHING ALL OVER AGAIN! THE REVIVING ACTION REVERTS THE PATIENT TO INFANTHOOD! TERRY HAS ACTUALLY BEEN DEAD FOR OVER SIX YEARS!

GOOD LORD! HERE, DOCTOR! THIS IS HER ROOM!



HOWARDS AND WHEEDS FORCED OPEN TERRY'S DOOR! AS IT SWUNG AHAIR, THE PETID RAMBIC ODOR OF DEATH BURSTED THEIR NOSTRILS! TERRY LAY UPON HER BED IN A FLIMSY PINK GOWN! HER FLESH WAS ROTTEN UPON HER BONES! HER FACE WAS A GRAY, SKULL-LIKE DEATH-MADE... ITS BARRED TEETH SET IN AN IDIOTIC GRIN! A WAVE OF NAUSEA SWEEPED OVER HOWARD AS HE STARED AT THE SHAPeless PUTRID REMAINS OF HIS ONCE LOVELY WIFE...


COME, MY BOY! WE CAN'T HELP HER NOW!



HER, HER! SO THAT'S WHY TERRY DOWNED HERSELF WITH PERFUME! AFTER ALL... HOW MUCH CAN A BOOB STAND, EVEN A DEAD BOOB! POOR HUSBAND! WELL, A COLD WIFE IS BETTER THAN NO WIFE AT ALL... STONE COLD, THAT IS! MAYBE, IF TERRY'S STATED UP NORTH, SHE'D HAVE LASTED INDEFINITELY, INSTEAD OF GETTING ON THE MOOF! I'LL GET THOSE HOT BLIES! LIGHTS DIDN'T HELP THE SITUATION, EITHER! OH, WELL! SHE'D PROBABLY HAVE BEEN A ROTTEN ACTRESS ANYWAY! NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE DRY-KEEPER 'UTE! SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG... THE RABBIT OF HONOR!



THE END!



## ACID TEST!

"If you think I'm going to divorce you, Homer Wormwood, you're insane! I know how much you've come to hate me . . . and the feeling is mutual . . . but you're not getting away from me so easily! I've given up the best years of my life to you and you'll continue to support me as long as I live!"

Homer watched his wife disappear into the kitchen, and a weary smile flared across his face. *Here it goes out n' way, Edna, be thoughr . . . as long as you live, eh? It may be a good deal less time than you think!*

His fingers shook as he took from his pocket a small bottle marked: CAUTION: SULPHURIC ACID! He glanced furtively toward the kitchen door, then removed the bottle cap and poured the contents of the vial into the drink he had been preparing for Edna. *This was the easiest way out!* But Edna to the acid test, in a manner of speaking . . . and watch the agony of her fatal failure!

His wife's voice was grating on his ears again, continuing the argument he had purposely begun the moment he had returned from work that night. He wouldn't have so submit much longer to that despicable voice, Homer mused. *Sulphuric was great at bring'ing peace to people!*

It was year six of Homer Wormwood's marital hell, and just the night before he had determined to make this the last year . . . the last month, week and day! He had quietly cried to squem loose by divorce, but it had resulted only in Edna redoubling her vituperative squalling about his inefficiency as a help-mate, provider and companion. Divorce was totally out of the question, she had screamed at him so often that it had become only a vague rumble in his ears. They were stuck with each

other . . . forever! And Homer had gradually come to realize that Edna liked the state of things . . . thrived on his being trapped for life . . . exulted over her ability to make him cringe and quail before her razor-sharp tongue. And realization that Edna derived enjoyment from these furious ruses, had inspired Homer's plan for freedom. He had begun the fight tonight with the idea of getting her wound up in another of her turbulent tantrums . . . was praying that she would become blind with pent-up rage! So blind that she would gulp down her drink without a moment's hesitation!

"Haven't you got anything to say in your own defense, you miserable fool?" Edna had roared the room and was standing opposite him, her face flushed with the heat of her own words.

*Not another word, Homer cautioned himself. My silence always infuriates her. A couple more minutes of ranting with no answer from me, and she'll grab that drink with unreasoning fury and gulp it down!*

Words continued to pour out of Edna like a raging torrent, and Homer stood his ground and looked sheepishly at the carpet. Suddenly, as though exhausted by her own violent clamoring, Edna stopped and picked up the cocktail glass Homer had filled for her. She held it poised in front of her lips.

*She's going to drink it now! he thought. If I keep up this deflated act just a moment longer . . .*

"Pahhh!" Edna started at that moment. "If there's anything I detest, it's a man who acts like a whipped dog! Maybe this will stir you up!" And with that, Edna hurled her drink in Homer's bewildered face.

A blanket of pain seared into his brain. His eyes became orbs of screaming hot agony . . . the stretch of his own tortured flesh choked his nostrils. And the last thing Homer Wormwood heard, before a veil of unconsciousness descended upon him, was the wail of his own voice stretching aloud a single word: "ACID ACID. . . ACID. . . !"

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# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Crawl into the old Crypt crawls! Not to be confused by those other two art lovers, V. E. and G. W., who have been mesmerizing you with miserable morbid music from their rotting record racks, I have recently obtained a collection of folk songs from some dead folk! Later some while I found a few pieces on my pulsating piano! I'll start my next melody with that old favorite, "On Top of Old Spooky", and my next way through "The Lion Shredder", and for my last offering I'll give you with my noted condition of the latest-time made popular by Country Stars, "Ghost Train"! But while my last bubble blower is talking the tracks, let us discuss more scary things!

First of all, the noted Car "Queen-of-the-Inner" write-essence... **THE FICKLY GRAVE-DIGGERS AND MONUMENT CHISELERS (WE WRAP 'EM, THEN TAG THEM, CLAMMING AND SHOP-LIFTING ASSOCIATION OF CHERRYSTONE, MAINE...** have just dug up the heaviest set possible! First place goes to **Donovan Dark Davis (MY BOY)**, for his bloody **GROUNDS FOR MORMON** School which is taken by **Coating his Cranium**, for his shocking **ROTTEN THING** To **Glaciously Graham** legs go third place because... for his cowardly **EDGES FOR A SPIN**! Every Jack Brown, who shook spot with his bonebreaking **BOARD TO DEATH**! The last, **WERTHOOP**, leads in fifth.

And now a message from my idiot editor! They have instructed me to take you authors who have written in that EACH of your letters has been carefully read, and the contents as well as compliments given, read, digested, and as most cases acted upon! They have asked me to sincerely thank all of you who have written! Their only regret is that they find it impossible to answer each and every letter personally, so they would like as much to do! (The above statements constitute a paid political machine contract! The opinions expressed in these statements are not necessarily those of your columnist! In fact, I don't give a damn's opinion! They if you write or not! Come I'm not in the habit of hiring those ridiculous social and business organizations to assist your various, vulgar tastes! Now let's not get HASTY, old boy! These words constitute your **BREAD AND BLOOD**! Their wish is now command—Ed! So don't any of them with you are serious should drop dead! (Aww, stop leaving your toothless gums and tell me about your **Intestinal**—Ed! Oh, yeah! As I'm sure you've noticed, there has been a deluge of questions on the words making use of key EC title words such as **TERROR, HORROR, FEAR, and WORDS**! While it's true that EC was the first to use these words... along with **HAUNT, CRYPT, and TALENT**... in the comic mag field, these words cannot be repeated! Any old slob can come along and use these words as long as he doesn't use them in the same combinations that E.C. has used them in its titles! That this has caused much confusion among you clever readers who have yet to learn to recognize an EC mag by its format and words is laugh! The bigger issue when I was informed that some publisher had put out a book called "Telling Terror" the title of our comic! Well, let us say, I jumped down my idiot editor's throat... and they in turn jumped down the rival publisher's

throat... and the name will be changed! As far as those other titles that were equally close to EC's are concerned, all I can do is to ask you to open your blood-shot eyes, try not to clatter, and look for the EC seal... the words re-plastered with 'em! So get smart, babies... wake up! (Aww, shoo! You're over-doing it!—Editors!) So stop relating my twisted story!

And now for some mail... a letter from Grace is left for us!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

... I notice that you always get the impression, "kiddie"! That I don't like because although I am only 14 years old, I'm sure that many adults read your mag. And I don't think of myself as a "kiddie" either!

Robert Rattle  
San Antonio, Texas

Well, old man, when you're as old as I am even an adult is a "kiddie"! But when I call you "kiddie" it's really a form of endearment... an acknowledgment of my admiration whether you be 5 or 50! But if enough of you kiddies write in and complain, I'll not be able to ignore a possible!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

My father is a barber, and now he only has your magazine in the rack to his shop. When the customers read them, their heads stand on end and it makes my old man a job easier!

Eddie Festina  
Lansing City, M.I.

Larry Barker kindly asks!

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

The store keeper where I get your mag keeps a copy hidden for me so I'm sure of getting it!

Robert Foster  
Greenwood, Dela.

Never can tell when the store might be hidden, kiddie! Why don't you make doubly sure of getting every copy by subscribing... The let me post a supply... all necessary items!

And sets of pictures of the Three Ghastlies are still for... might as well not wait any longer to order... the price isn't going down... and this offer is limited! It will expire in 1957! And remember... only 125 sets to a customer (each of a quarter of covered! No wholesale price!)

The address for mail, picture orders, subscriptions, and inserts is

The Crypt-Keeper  
Room 708, Dept. 30  
225 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 11, N.Y.

**THIS LITTLE GEM OF BLACK  
HORROR IS CALLED...**

*"Auntie, it's  
Coal Inside!"*



TOM BROKE HIS SEVEN-YEAR-OLD HEAD ANGRILY! THE VOICE CONTINUED! IT GRATED IN TOM'S EARS! THIS TIME IT WAS HIGH-PITCHED AND EXCITED! IT WAS ALWAYS DIFFERENT! LAST TIME IT'D BEEN LOW AND SOFT! THE TIME BEFORE THAT, IT'D BEEN LOUD AND BRUFF...!

SO ON, TOM! YOUR AUNT'S NOT HOME NOW! IT'S A GOOD CHANCE! YOU NEED A FEW PIECES, AUNT! SO AHEAD! SO ON DOWN!

NO! AUNT AUNTS FORBID ME! I MUST! AUNT AUNTS SAID.



SHE'LL NEVER KNOW, TOM! NOW ARE YOU GOING TO BE ABLE TO WALK UP THE SIDEWALK WITHOUT A HUNK OF COAL? JUST ONE PIECE... ONE SMALL PIECE!

SEE, I DO NEED IT BADLY! TODAY'S THE GAME! I GOTTA KEEP SCORE! OKAY! I'LL DO IT! I'LL GO DOWN INTO THE COAL-BIN!



TOMMY OPENED THE DOOR IN THE KITCHEN THAT LED TO THE CELLAR AND TIPTOED DOWN THE STEPS. HE HESITATED AT THE BOTTOM, PEERING THROUGH THE BLOOM AT THE BOARD-PARTITION NEXT TO THE FURNACE THAT SECTIONED OFF THE COAL-BIN FROM THE REST OF THE CELLAR.

OVERHEAD, A BOARD CREAKED! TOMMY STOPPED BESIDE THE COAL-BIN DOOR, LOOKING UP.

MOTHER... MAYBE? SAW SHE COULDN'T HAVE COME TO THE STORE AND BACK SO FAST?

TOMMY LISTENED FOR A MOMENT. THERE WAS NO SOUND! HE SWUNG OPEN THE COAL-BIN DOOR AND STEPPED IN... ONTO THE BLACK DUST-COVERED FLOOR...

SEE! THE COAL'S DON'T WORK! ALMOST ALL USED! SHE 'WILL' UP! AUNT AGNES? 'DUCK! GRAB! CUNT TO ORDER! A FEW PILES! MORE!



SEE! LAST TIME AUNT AGNES SAVED ME A GOOD LICKIN'!

LAST TIME YOU GOT CAUGHT? NOT THIS TIME, TOMMY!



A FAINT LIGHT FILTERED THROUGH THE BLACKENED CELLAR WINDOW HIGH UP IN THE WALL OF THE COAL BIN. TOMMY KNELT AND PICKED UP THREE OF THE LARGEST LUMPS HE COULD SEE...

BUT! THESE ARE ROSE DRESSES!

GRAT! NOW, GRAB! LET'S GET UPSTAIRS BEFORE SHE COMES BACK!



TOMMY WENT OUT OF THE COAL-BIN... CLOSED THE DOOR BEHIND HIM... AND TIPTOED UPSTAIRS JUST AS HE CAME THROUGH THE CELLAR DOOR INTO THE KITCHEN, THE FRONT DOOR SLAMMED!

GOLLY! AUNT AGNES...

TOMMY! I'M HOME! ARE YOU AROUND? COME HELP ME WITH THESE BUNDLES!



TOMMY'S FIRST URGE WAS TO RUN AWAY. BUT BEFORE HE COULD MAKE A MOVE, HIS AUNT WAS IN THE KITCHEN BLARING DOWN AT HIM...

TOMMY! DIDN'T YOU HEAR WE CALL YOU TO HELP ME WITH THESE BUNDLES?

L. I'M SORRY AUNT AGNES! HERE THEY ARE! ONE!



TOMMY EXTENDED TWO BLACKENED, COAL-DUST COVERED HANDS! HIS AUNT GASPED! HER FACE GREW PURPLE WITH RAGE!

TOMMY! YOU'VE BEEN IN THE COAL-BIN AGAIN!

NOO! WHO, ME?



AUNT AGNES SLAMMED THE BUNDLES DOWN ON THE KITCHEN TABLE.

LOOK AT YOU! YOU'RE FILTHY! I TOLD YOU WHAT WOULD HAPPEN IF YOU WENT DOWN THERE AGAIN!

SEE, AUNT AGNES! I NEEDED A HIDE TO KEEP SCORE! THERE'S A GAME THIS AFTERNOON! THE VOICE REMINDED ME!

ARE YOU GOING TO START TELLING ME ABOUT THAT STUPID VOICE YOU KEEP HEARING? YOU'RE JUST LIKE YOUR FATHER! A GOOD-FOR-NOTHING LIAR!

I'M NOT A LIAR! I HEAR A VOICE! HONEST! IT TALKS TO ME. IT MAKES ME DO THINGS!



LIAR! LIAR! YOU'RE JUST BAD. THAT'S ALL! NO GOOD LIKE YOUR FATHER! OH, I WARNED MY SISTER NOT TO MARRY HIM!

STOP IT! STOP TALKING LIKE THAT! MY DADDY WAS WONDERFUL!



MAN! HE WAS A WORTHLESS DRUNKARD! IF IT WASN'T FOR HIM, YOUR MOTHER'D BE ALIVE TODAY!

HE WASN'T A DRUNKARD! HE WASN'T!

NO? HOW DO YOU THINK HE AND YOUR MOTHER WERE KILLED? HE WAS DEAD-DRUNK WHEN HE DROVE HOME THAT NIGHT!

NO! I HATE YOU! I HATE YOU!



HE USED TO HEAR VOICES, TOO! VOICES, MAN! THEY WERE THE D.T.'S! HE CAUSED NOTHING BUT TROUBLE FOR ALL OF US! LOOK AT ME! NOW, I'M STUCK WITH YOU!

THE VOICE SAYS YOU HATE ME. THAT'S WHY YOU'RE ALWAYS TELLING AT ME!

I TELL AT YOU BECAUSE YOU'RE BAD! NOW YOU LISTEN TO ME, YOUR MAN! THE NEXT TIME YOU GO DOWN INTO THAT COAL-MIN, I'LL SEND YOU AWAY TO THE CATHAN HOME!

NO, AUNT AGNES! PLEASE DON'T SEND ME AWAY! PLEASE! I'LL BE GOOD! I'LL BE GOOD!





THE VOICE WAS OUTSIDE THE WINDOW NOW! IT DRIFTED BACK TO TOBY FROM HALF-WAY DOWN TO THE GROUND...

"OH NO! IT'S GONE! IT LOOKS GONE!"



TOBY SLIPPED ONE FOOT OVER THE WINDOW SILL... THEN THE OTHER! HE STARTED DOWN THE WALLS! SUDDENLY A TRUCK PULLED UP BEFORE THE HOUSE...

"GOLLY A TRUCK! THE DRIVER SEES ME!"

"HEY, BOY! YOU'LL BET HURT!"



TOBY DROPPED TO THE GROUND AS AUNT AGNES EXPLODED THROUGH THE FRONT DOOR...

"I'M THE LOCKSMITH. MA'AM! I SAW HIM AS HE DROVE UP!"

"FOURF BET IN THE HOUSE! I'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU LATER!"



TOBY SCRAMBLED INTO THE HOUSE AND UP TO HIS ROOM! AUNT AGNES TOOK THE LOCKSMITH INTO THE CELLAR...

"GRAY, MA'AM! I BOY YUH! YOU WANT A LOCK ON 'ER SO THE KID CAN'T OPEN IT, ENT ONE THAT OPENS WITH A KEY?"

"THAT'S IT AND... OH, DEAR! IT'S BETTER ORDER SOME MORE COALS!"



WHILE THE LOCKSMITH BURED HIMSELF ON THE COAL BIN DOWN, AUNT AGNES PHONED THE COAL COMPANY...

"THERE'S A LOT OF COAL FOR ONE DELIVERER, MA'AM!"

"I SAID FOUR TONS AND THAT'S WHAT I WANT! WE HAVE A BIG COAL BIN! I ALWAYS ORDER FOUR TONS AT A TIME!"



OF COURSE, TOBY WAS PUNISHED FOR BREAKING OUT OF THE WINDOW, BUT HE PROMISED ONCE MORE THAT HE'D IGNORE THE VOICE FROM THEN ON! THE NEXT DAY...

"NOW YOU'RE TO STAY IN YOUR ROOM WHILE I'M AT THE STORE! IF THE COAL SHOULD COME, JUST TELL THEM TO PUT IT IN THROUGH THE CELLAR WINDOW! AND DON'T FORGET WHAT YOU PROMISED LAST NIGHT!"

"DON'T WORRY, AUNTIE AGNES! I'M NEVER GONNA TO LISTEN TO THE VOICE AGAIN!"



A LITTLE LATER, TOBY LOOKED UP FROM HIS TOWER! SOMEONE WAS CALLING HIM!

"TOBY! TOBY, HELP ME! COME DOWNSTAIRS PLEASE!"

"HUNT! WHY IT'S AUNT AGNES CALLING ME!"



TOBY THROD DOWNSTAIRS! THE VOICE WAS COMING FROM THE CELLAR.

IS... IS THAT YOU, AUNTIE AGNES?

YES, TOBY! COME DOWN! PLEASE! LET ME OUT OF THE COAL-BIN!



THE COAL-BIN?

YES! THE DOOR LOCKED SHUT ON ME! I CAME IN TO SEE IF THE WOOD-BOX WAS OPEN SO THEY COULD DELIVER THE COAL! HURRY! THEY'LL BE HERE ANY MINUTE!



AW, NO! I KNOW YOU! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO GET ME INTO ANYMORE TROUBLE!

FORGET FOR HEAVEN'S SAKE! COME DOWN HERE AND LET ME OUT! THE KEY IS IN THE LOCK! JUST TURN IT! PLEASE! QUICKLY!



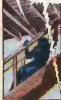
I PROMISED I WOULDN'T LISTEN TO YOU ANYMORE, AND I WON'T! YOU JUST SOUND LIKE AUNTIE AGNES! YESTERDAY YOU TRIED TO SOUND LIKE MY MOMMY.

FORGET! AM YOUR AUNTIE AGNES! PLEASE COME DOWN! PLEASE!



WAS MY DADDY A DRUNKARD, AUNTIE AGNES?

NO, TOBY! YOUR DADDY WAS A GOOD MAN! NOW PLEASE COME DOWN.



SEE? YOU'RE NOT! FORGET! FOR MY AUNTIE AGNES! GOOD! MY AUNTIE AGNES! GOOD! THE ALWAYS SAID DADDY WAS A DRUNKARD! OPENING!



THE SHRIEL SCREAMS OF DELIGHT FROM THE CHILDREN BANGING AROUND THE COAL TRUCK AND THE DEAFENING ROAR AS THE BLACK FUEL CASCADED DOWN THE TIN SLIDE DROWNED OUT AUNT AGNES'S SHRIES OF TERROR! LITTLE BY LITTLE, THE HYDRAULIC-LIFTED THE TRUCK-BODY UNTIL FOUR TONS OF COAL HAD POURED INTO THE COAL-BIN BEYOND THE TINY CELLAR WINDOW! FOUR TONS! ENOUGH TO CRUSH THE STRONGEST OF MEN, AS LAST A FRAIL, BUTTER OLD MAN.



NOW DOESN'T THAT STORY LEAVE YOU WITH A LUMP IN YOUR THROAT? MEN, NOW! IT DID! OLD JOSEPH! IN FACT THEY FOUND ONE IN HER THROAT, AND TWO MORE IN HER MOUTH WHEN THEY FINALLY DUG HER OUT! LUMPS OF COAL, THAT IS! AS FOR TOBY... WELL, HE DOESN'T HEAR VOICES ANYMORE! NOW, IT'S A SYMPHONY ORCHESTRA! THEY SAY THE KIDS GOT A GREAT FUTURE... WRITING THE MUSIC TO THOSE SINGING COMMERCIALS! NOW CAN A SEVEN-YEAR-OLD WRITE MUSIC TO A SINGING COMMERCIAL? COME, COME, NOW! DON'T TELL ME YOU NEVER HEARD ONE! MEN, HERE! BUT

IF THEY HAVEN'T DRIVEN YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND, MY SET ACTUAL PHOTO WILL READ MY COLUMN, THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER, FOR ALL THE INFO!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLO! SO I GOTTA WIND UP THE GHOST-KEEPER'S MAD-MAD AGAIN, EH? YOU KNOW WHY THEY GIVE ME THIS SPOT? 'CAUSE I'M THE MOST HORRIBLE! DON'T WORRY! MY 1000+ EDITORS KNOW A BAD THING! YEP, IT'S THE OLD WITCH MISTRESS OF THE HAUNT OF FEAR! THE FIRE IS LIT UNDER MY YOG-KNOW-WHAT, AND I'M READY TO DISH OUT ANOTHER UP MY PUTRID-PORTIONS OF POLSATING PLEASANTRIES! THIS LITTLE LADLE OF LURID LOATHSOMENESS WILL DEFINITELY WHET YOUR APPETITE! I CALL IT...GWA...

**NOURNIN,  
AMBROSE...**



ANDREW GEMENT PUSHED OPEN THE HUGE IRON GATE OF HIS UNCLE'S MIST ESTATE AND MOVED UP THE TREE-LINED ROAD TOWARD THE PALACIAL HOUSE THAT LOOMED UP BEFORE HIM IN THE SEMI-DARKNESS.

"SO THIS IS HAWLEY MANOR? I KNEW THAT UNCLE AMBROSE WAS WEALTHY, BUT I NEVER EXPECTED THIS! I WONDER WHY THEY'VE BECOME RECLUSIVES...HE AND AUNT ELRAY! OH, WELL! I'LL GET ALL THE DOPE EVENTUALLY..."





ANDREW STEPPED ONTO THE PORCH OF THE IMPRESSIVE MAN-  
SION AND LIFTED THE HEAVY  
BRASS KNOCKER THAT ADORNED  
THE MASSIVE OAK FRONT-DOOR.  
THE HOLLOW BOOM ECHOED AND  
HE EDGED WITHIN.

AS THE DIN OF THE DOOR-  
KNOCKER DIED AWAY, SLOW  
FOOTSTEPS APPROACHED! THE  
HUGE DOOR SWUNG OPEN AND  
A WITHERED WRINKLED FACE  
PEERED OUT.

THE OLD MAN'S AGED FACE LIT  
UP AND A SMILE SPREAD ACROSS  
IT! HE STEPPED BACK PRESENT-  
ING ANDREW TO ENTER.

UGH! THIS PLACE  
GIVES ME THE CREEPS!  
HOW ANYONE COULD  
STAY HERE FOR THREE  
YEARS WITHOUT  
LEAVING IT BEATS  
ME!

Y-YES?

ARE...ARE YOU MY  
UNCLE ANDREW?  
ANDREW HARLEY?

THAT'S ME! COME  
IN! YOU MUST BE RIGHT, OR!  
ANDREW, MY WIFE'S  
SISTER'S BOY!  
I'VE BEEN  
SO ANXIOUS  
TO MEET  
YOU AND  
AUNT ELZA...

THE OLD MAN CLOSED THE DOOR AND LOOKED  
AROUND NERVOUSLY! THEN HE MOVED CLOSE TO  
ANDREW.

DON'T, DON'T BE TOO  
DISAPPOINTED WITH  
AUNT ELZA, WBY!  
SHE...SHE JUST  
WELL!

OH! I'M  
SORRY TO  
HEAR IT!  
WHAT'S  
WRONG?

THE OLD MAN CONTINUED TO PEER FROM SIDE TO  
SIDE! THEN, HE TAPPED HIS TEMPLE.

SHE...SHE'S NOT WELL...HERE!  
EVER SINCE THE FIRST DEATH...

THE FIRST  
DEATH?

OF COURSE! YOU COULDN'T  
HAVE KNOWN! IT HAPPENED  
THREE YEARS AGO! ONE OF  
YOUR DISTANT COUSINS CAME  
TO STAY WITH US! LOVELY  
WOMAN! SHE...SHE DIED  
IN HER SLEEP!

NO! I...I  
DON'T KNOW!  
BUT YOU SAID  
THAT WAS THE  
FIRST! WERE  
THERE...OTHERS?

TWO OTHERS! MY AUNT  
BROTHER CAME TO STAY  
WITH US ABOUT TWO YEARS  
AGO! HE...HE WAS OLDER  
THAN I! HE PASSED AWAY  
ABOUT A MONTH LATER! THEN  
MY WIFE'S MACE CAME! IT  
WAS TERRIBLE! SUCH A  
YOUNG GIRL...

YOU...YOU  
BETTER TELL  
ME ABOUT  
AUNT ELZA.  
UNCLE! IS  
THERE SOME-  
THING I SHOULD  
KNOW?





HER MOTHER'S DEATH! YOU  
WAS THE LAST STRAW!  
SHE TOOK THE FIRST  
TWO HARDS, BUT THE  
LAST... WELL... SOME-  
THING JUST... SNAPPED!

YOU  
HEAR  
SHE'S  
CRAZY?



SH-H-H! SHE'LL HEAR  
YOU! NO! NOT EXACTLY!  
SHE... SHE'S JUST A  
LITTLE OVER-ORA-  
MATIC... EMOTIONAL...  
YOU KNOW! SUPER-  
SENSITIVE! SHE  
TENDS TO EXAG-  
GERATE!

I... I  
SEE!



HEN, HEN! JUST  
HUMOR ME,  
ANDREW! SHE  
DOESN'T MEAN  
ANY HARM!

I... I WILL,  
UNCLE!

AMBROSE!  
WHO WAS  
IT?



A FRAIL, THIN, WEE-EYED OLD WOMAN TOTTLED  
INTO THE LIBRARY WHERE ANDREW AND AMBROSE  
STOOD TALKING! SHE STARED AT AMBROSE.

WHO'S HE?  
WHAT'S HE  
DOING  
HERE?

THIS IS ANDREW  
MARLER, MY DEAR!  
I WROTE TO HIM...  
INVITING HIM TO  
STAY WITH US!

ANDREW!  
STELLA, MY  
SISTER'S...  
SON'S HAD IT  
COME TO  
THAT?



I... I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND.  
UNCLE AMBROSE!  
WHAT DOES SHE  
MEAN?



NOTHING, MY  
BOY! NOTHING!  
YOU SEE... YOU  
ARE OUR ONLY  
LIVING NEAR-  
HOW!

THE OTHERS  
ARE DEAD!  
ALL DEAD!  
THREE OF  
THEM ARE  
OUT THERE  
IN THE  
RAVINE!



PLEASE, ELZA!  
LET'S TALK  
ABOUT MORE  
PLEASANT  
THINGS!

THIS IS A  
WONDERFUL  
LIBRARY,  
UNCLE  
AMBROSE!  
YOU HAVE  
SO MANY  
BOOKS!

YES! THOU-  
SANDS OF  
THEM! SO YOU  
READ, ANDREW?



A LITTLE,  
MAY ELZA! A  
LITTLE!

EVEN READ  
'MACBETH'.  
ANDREW'S WHERE  
IT SAYS... 'MURDER  
WILL OUT'!

ELZA!  
COME, ANDREW!  
I WILL SHOW  
YOU YOUR  
ROOM!

ELSA STARED AT ANDREW, AS HE PASSED HER AND FOLLOWED AMBROSE UP THE MARBLE STAIRS TO THE SECOND FLOOR! THEY STOPPED BEFORE A DOOR AT THE END OF A LONG HALL.

I HOPE YOU WILL BE COMFORTABLE IN HERE, ANDREW!

I'M SURE I WILL BE, UNCLE AMBROSE!

ANDREW'S BEDROOM WAS LARGE AND LAVISHLY FURNISHED WITH EXPENSIVE ANTIQUES! A STONE FIREPLACE COVERED ONE WALL OF THE ROOM! ANDREW TOUCHED A MATCH TO THE WOODS PILED ON THE ANDIRONS, AND SOON THE FIRE'S CHEERY GLOW DANCED ACROSS THE FLOOR! SUDDENLY...

WHO...WHO'S THERE?

IT'S ME...ANDREW! YOUR AUNT ELSA!

THE OLD WOMAN STARED AT ANDREW FROM THE PARTLY-OPENED DOOR...

OH! COME IN, AUNT ELSA! SIT DOWN!

I...I'VE COME TO WARN YOU, ANDREW!

WARN ME, AUNT ELSA?

GET OUT, ANDREW! GET OUT OF THIS HOUSE! NO ONE EVER COME BACK! HE'S A FIEND...A HORRIBLE FIEND!

YOU MEAN UNCLE AMBROSE?

YES! I MUSTN'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN! IT'S HORRIBLE HORRIBLE! HE...HE'S A...

ELSA!

AMBROSE STOOD FRAMED IN THE DOORWAY. HIS WRINKLED FACE PURPLE WITH ANGER! HE SHARLED AT THE OLD WOMAN.

ELSA! GET TO BED...THIS MINUTE!

Y-YES, AMBROSE! I...I'M GOING!

THE OLD WOMAN LOOKED AT ANDREW. HER EYES PLEADING, AS SHE CHIFFLED OFF...

REMEMBER, ANDREW! MURDER WILL OUT!

HURRY ON, YES, AUNT ELSA!

GOOD-NIGHT, ANDREW! COME, MY DEAR!



THE NEXT MORNING ANDREW WAS AWAKENED BY A FRANTIC POUNDING ON HIS BEDROOM DOOR...

ANDREW! WAKE UP!  
IT'S AUNT  
ELSA! SHE...



HELLO! THE PLOT THICKENS,  
EH, KIDDER? WELL, THE GOG  
SANE AND PROFOUND OLD  
ELSA - DEAD OF NATURAL CAUSES!  
ANDREW'S UNCLE WAS PRETTY  
BROKEN UP OVER ELSA'S DEATH!  
THE FUNERAL WAS DIMINISHED  
AND SHORT! THEY CARRIED THE  
OLD GAL OUT TO THE FAMILY  
MAUSOLEUM... AND THAT WAS  
THAT...



ONE EVENING, A FEW DAYS AFTER  
ELSA'S ENTOMBMENT...



WHAT'S THAT?  
LOOKS LIKE A FLOWER  
DOWN THERE... GOING  
TOWARD THE MAUSO-  
LEUM! WHY, IT'S  
UNCLE ANDREW!  
AND HE'S CARRYING  
FLOWERS!

WHAT IS IT, DUTY?  
WHAT'S HAPPENED?



ELSA? SHE... SOB...  
SOB... SHE'S  
DEAD?



EVENING AFTER EVENING, ANDREW  
WOULD LEAVE THE HOUSE AND GO  
DOWN TO THE FAMILY MAUSOLEUM  
TO SPEND SOME TIME WITH HIS  
DEAR DEPARTED ELSA...



POOR OLD GUY!  
HE REALLY  
MISSES HER!

THEN, ONE EVENING, ANDREW WAS BROWSING AROUND  
THE LIBRARY LOOKING FOR SOMETHING TO READ. A  
TITLE CAUGHT HIS EYE! 'MACBETH'? HE COULD  
ALMOST HEAR AUNT ELSA'S VOICE...



EVER READ  
'MACBETH', ANDREW?  
WHERE IT SAYS  
'MURDER WILL OUT'?

ANDREW REACHED UP AND PULLED DOWN THE BOOK!  
HE OPENED IT...



WHY, WHY THIS ISN'T 'MACBETH' AT  
ALL! IT'S A DIARY! AUNT ELSA'S  
DIARY!

HEL, HEL! YEP! THERE IT WAS! HIDDEN BETWEEN THE LEATHER-BOUND COVERS OF 'MACBETH'! AUNT ELSA'S DIARY! ANDREW READ IT! EVERY PAGE! ELSA'S WORDS WERE TRUE... BUT SOME ENTRIES MADE SENSE...

...AND THIS ONE, INSPECTOR! LISTEN! I KNOW NOW HOW HE MURDERED THEM! SUFFOCATION! HE DOPED THEM SO THEY COULDN'T RESIST... THEN SMOOTHERED THEM WITH 'A PILLOW' BUT WHY NOT?

AND THIS ONE! NOW I KNOW WHY! IT MUST NEVER HAPPEN AGAIN! I MUST NOT LET IT! AND THE LAST ENTRY! ANOTHER HAS COME! HE WILL BE NEXT! I MUST WARN HIM! THE PERSO WILL DO TO HIM WHAT HE HAS DONE TO THE OTHERS! IF AMBROSE WERE TO FIND OUT THAT I MEAN TO TELL MURDER EVERYTHING, HE WOULD KILL ME!

MINUTE! AND YOU SAY AMBROSE CAME IN THAT NIGHT AND INTERRUPTED ELSA? JUST AS SHE WAS ABOUT TO TELL YOU SOMETHING?

THAT'S RIGHT, SIR! BUT ONE THING PUZZLES ME! IF AMBROSE MURDERED ELSA, WHY DOES HE BLOOMH HERE?

IF HE MURDERED HER? WHY THE DOG FELT IT WAS A NATURAL DEATH?

SUFFOCATION LOOKS LIKE A NATURAL DEATH!

THE ONLY WAY TO PROVE THIS ONE WAY OR THE OTHER, MR. SHERAT, IS TO GET PERMISSION TO EXAMINE THE BODY AND PERFORM AN AUTOPSY!

PROMISING NOT TO REVEAL THAT ANDREW HAD TIPPED THEM OFF, TWO DETECTIVES CAME TO SEE AMBROSE HAMLET...

EXCUSE MY LATE WIFE'S HOOD! PERFORM AN AUTOPSY ON HER! NEVER! NEVER!

IF YOU REFUSE, MR. HAMLET, WE CAN GET A COURT ORDER GIVING US PERMISSION TO DO IT OVER YOUR OBJECTIONS!

AMBROSE'S AGED BODY SHOOK AS HE BOBBED! A TEAR TRICKLED DOWN HIS WIDENED CHEEK...

PLEASE! YOU HAVE NO RIGHT TO DISTURB HER! SHE'S BEEN LAID TO REST! LEAVE HER... I SEE YOUR SON... SON... LEAVE HER BE!

LET'S GO RIGHT, CHIEF?



THE TWO DETECTIVES LEFT THE SCREAMING OLD MAN! ANDREW STOPPED THEM AT THE DOOR.



LATER THAT EVENING, ANDREW WASHED FROM HIS WRATH AS OLD AMBROSE CROSSED THE GARDEN TO THE FAMILY MAUSOLEUM.



AFTER THE OLD MAN ENTERED THE CRYPT, ANDREW WENT DOWNSTAIRS AND ACROSS THE GARDEN! THE DOOR TO THE MAUSOLEUM WAS PARTLY OPEN! ANDREW, PERCHED IN



A WAVE OF NAUSEA AND REVULSION SWEEP OVER ANDREW! HE TURNED AWAY FROM THE HORRIBLE SIGHT AND RAN TOWARD THE HOUSE! FINALLY, HE COULD NO LONGER HOLD HIS GUTS! HE RAN BACK TO THE GARDEN.



THEY DRAGGED THE SHRIEKING, CLAWING OLD MAN FROM HIS VICTIM AND TOOK HIM AWAY! LATER THEY RETURNED TO THE CRYPT AND EXAMINED THE OTHER COFFINS.

THE SLEET GEMERT! WHEN HE TOOK OUT FROM THE UNDERSTONES IN TOWN, THAT HAWLEY REFUSED TO ALLOW HIM TO EMBALM THE BODIES, HE KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG! THE OTHER CORPSES HAD BEEN STRIPPED OF THEIR FLESH, TOO!

THAT'S WHY HE INVITED YOU HERE TO HAWLEY MANOR! LIKE THE OTHERS, HE INTENDED YOU TO BE ONE OF HIS MEAL-TICKETS!

YEE, YEE! LOOK! THEY CAUGHT UP WITH OLD AMBROSE WHEN THEY DID! HE WAS RUNNING OUT OF RELATIVES! THANKS TO OLD ELZA WHO WAS FED UP WITH THE WHOLE AFFAIR, ANDREW WAS SAVED FROM A VERY DISTASTEFUL EXPERIENCE! AND IF YOU'D LIKE TO BE SAVED FROM A DISTASTEFUL EXPERIENCE, DON'T

SEND FOR MY PHOTO! THE METHOD FOR OBTAINING IT CAN BE FOUND IN THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER... FOR YOU FRIENDS WHO LIKE THAT SORT OF STUFF! I'LL ALL SEE YOU REST IN THE VAULT OF HORROR! TILL THEN, SNOOD-BYE, AND UNPLEASANT DREAMS!



# IN ALL THY WAYS ACKNOWLEDGE HIM



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# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

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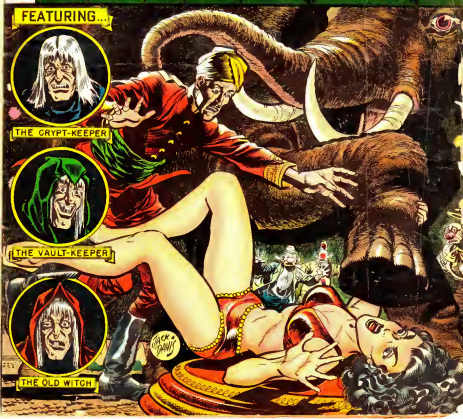
THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH





**HEE, HEE! E.C.'S SCIENCE-FICTION  
MAGS MUST BE PRETTY FIENDISH  
TO GIVE THESE TWO GHOULGUTS  
A CHARGE! LOOK AT 'EM!**



**E.C. IS  
PROUDEST  
OF ITS TWO  
SCIENCE-FICTION  
MAGAZINES!**



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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEHEHE! COME IN, FRIENDS! COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! ONCE AGAIN WE MEET FOR OUR SHIVERY SESSION! YEA, IT'S YOUR HOST IN HORROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, OPENING HIS MAD-MAD WITH A TERRIFYING TALE GUARANTEED TO CURL YOUR HAIR AND CURDLE YOUR BLOOD! SEVERAL ISSUES BACK, I TOLD YOU A TARN ABOUT A BUTCHER WHICH PROVED VERY POPULAR! ONE WHO FAR EVEN SENT ME A CLEAVER, WITH COMPLETE DIRECTIONS FOR WHAT HE WANTED ME TO DO WITH IT... BUT IT DIDN'T SHKE ME! SO I DECIDED TO TELL YOU ANOTHER STORY ABOUT A BUTCHER... ONE THAT I'M SURE WILL SCARE YOUR SPINE-RIG! I CALL THIS MEATY LITTLE MORRID MELODRAMA...

AS THE NAUSEOUS CARNIVAL REHARRS ON A PARTICULARLY HOT DAY...

"TAIN'T THE MEAT...  
IT'S THE HUMANITY!"

NO ONE PAID MUCH ATTENTION TO EACH BRISTLE BEFORE WORLD WAR. IF YOU HAD JUST ANOTHER SMALL TOWN BUTCHERY, BUT THAT WAS BEFORE THE WAR! SUDDENLY, WITH THE ADVENT OF MEAT RATIONING... RED POINTS... AND CEILING PRICES... EACH BRISTLE BECAME VERY POPULAR...

POWER, ZACK!

NOTHING, MR. BRISTLE! NOTHING, MORNING, MORNING, MORNING, MORNING!

ON LINE EARLY I SEE!



828

HEH, HEH! TEP! SUDDENL, OL' ZACH BRITTLE FOUND HIMSELF THE MOST POPULAR MAN IN TOWN! HEH, HEH! WHY NOT? HE WAS THE ONLY BUTCHER! REMEMBER THOSE DAYS, KIDDIEST RATION BOOK? NO MARY RED POINTS FOR EACH POUND OF MEAT? NO MARY RED POINTS ALLOWED EACH PERSON TEN MONTHS! IT WAS PRETTY TUGH... THE SITUATION, THAT IS...



OH, DEAR! I ONLY HAVE FORTY-ONE POINTS LEFT, MR. BRITTLE! CAN I... ONE THEM TO YOU?



I'M ANFULLY SORRY, MRS. VISIBLE! I NEED THOSE POINTS IN ORDER TO BUY THE MEAT MYSELF! I COULDN'T DO THAT!

NO BIRDIN STEAKS, MR. BRITTLE!

SORRY, MR. FUDDY! I JUST SOLD THE LAST ONE TO MR. SUSPENSIVE! I COULDN'T YOU HAVE A FEW FORK SHOOPS?



SORRY, MISS DICK-LEGG! NOTHING BUT SALAM! LEFT! I EXPECT ANOTHER SHIPMENT TOMORROW! BUT YOU'D BETTER BE ON LINE EARLY! FIRST COME, FIRST SERVED, YOU KNOW!

POOR MR. BRITTLE! HE TRIES SO HARD! AND HE'S SO HONEST!

THIS RATIONING CERTAINLY IS HARD ON HIM!



YEP! MEAT RATIONING WAS HARD ON MR. BRITTLE! THAT IS, UNTIL HE DISCOVERED AN INTERESTING FACT...

IF I COULD GET A HIDE STEAK, MR. BRITTLE, I'D... ER... PAY! WE'D... SORT OF... FORGET ABOUT THE CULLING PRICE!

BUT THAT'S DIS-HONEST, MR. VANDERCLIFF! THAT'S BLACK MARKET!



NO TELLING HOW LONG THIS WAR WILL LAST, ZACH! MIGHT AS WELL MAKE HAY WHILE THE SUN SHINES! THERE ARE A FEW OF US WHO'D BE WILLING TO PAY ENOUGH TO GET WHAT WE WANT!

BUT WHAT ABOUT THE... THE POOR PEOPLE, MR. VANDERCLIFF?



SUIT YOURSELF, ZACH! YOU'RE ONE OF THEM, NOW! YOU COULD BE PRETTY WELL OFF IF YOU USED YOUR HEAD! THINK IT OVER!

I... I WILL, SIR! I'LL THINK IT OVER!



ONE THOUSAND? TWO THOUSAND? OH... PARDON ME? I WAS JUST COUNTING MY LOOP FROM THE BLACK MARKET OPERATION I WAS IN DURING THE WAR! WELL, HERE! THERE WAS A SHORTAGE OF CASSETS, Y'KNOW? I DID UP AN IDEA ON HOW TO CASH IN! ALL I HAD TO DO WAS CLEAN OFF THE DIRT AND POLISH 'EM UP AGAIN! HERE, HERE! AS FOR MR. GRISTLE... WELL... LET'S LOOK IN ON HIS HOME LIFE!



JUNIOR! EAT YOUR MEAT!

I'M NOT HUNGRY!

SEVENTEEN POINTS!



YOU SAY SOMETHING, ZACH?

HUN? OH? NO! I WAS JUST THINKING, DEAR!



YEP! MR. GRISTLE THOUGHT IT ALL OVER! AND HE MADE UP HIS MIND...

WHY, MR. GRISTLE? THERE ISN'T A DECENT PIECE OF MEAT IN YOUR WHOLE SNOWCASE!

THAT'S ALL I'VE GOT, MRS. GRINDY! SHORTAGE, Y'KNOW!



BUT I WAITED ON LINE FOR TWO HOURS! I'M THE FIRST CUSTOMER YOU'VE HAD TODAY!

THAT'S ALL I'VE GOT, MRS. GRINDY! I'M SORRY!



BUT AT NIGHT, SHADOWNY FRIESIES WOULD COME TO MR. GRISTLE'S STORE...

HERE'S YOUR STEAK, MR. VANDERCLIFF! TEN POUNDS!

AND HERE'S YOUR THIRTY BUCKS, MR. GRISTLE! OH! I'VE GOT ANOTHER CUSTOMER FOR YOU! HE WANTS STEAKS, TOO!



BUT I CAN'T GET ANYMORE, MR. VANDERCLIFF! I DON'T GET ENOUGH POINTS! AS IT IS, I'M GIVING THE LEFT-OVERS TO THE FOLKS IN TOWN!

YOU COULD FIGURE SOMETHING OUT, MR. GRISTLE! THE FOLKS IN TOWN PAY POINTS FOR THEIR MEAT! WHY THEN ANY MEAT THAT YOU CAN GET WITHOUT RED POINTS?



... AND AT THE THREE-QUARTER MARKER, IT'S FATHEAD, BY A FAT HEAD! AND NOW... AT THE STRIKER... IT'S... IT'S... HOLD IT! FATHEAD JUST STUMBLED! LOOKS LIKE HE BUSTED HIS LEFT TOO BAD! NOW THEY'LL HAVE TO SHOOT HIM! AND HE WAS SUCH A GOOD HORSE, TOO! ER... MR. BRISTLE? YOU LISTENING?

JINGLE! EAT YOUR MEAT!  
I'M NOT HUNGRY! NEXT TIME EXPECT ME TO EAT LIKE A HORSE!  
HORSE MEAT!

YOU SAY SOMETHING, JACK?  
HON? OH! NO? I WAS JUST THINKING, DEAR!



YET! MR. BRISTLE FOUND THE SOLUTION TO HIS PROBLEM! HE BEGAN BUYING HORSEMEAT, AND PASSING IT OFF TO HIS POOR CUSTOMERS AS THE REAL THING... THEREBY GETTING THOSE PRECIOUS RED-POINTS...

WHY YOU HAVE SUCH A NICE SELECTION NOW, MR. BRISTLE!

YES! WHAT WOULD YOU LIKE, MRS. SHERID? SOME STEAK? CHOPS?



AND WITH THE PRECIOUS RED-POINTS, HE'D PURCHASE GOOD MEAT WHICH HE'D SELL AT THE BLACK MARKET.

THESE STEAKS ARE GOING TO COST YOU MORE MONEY, MR. VANDELLOY! I'M TAKING ~~NO~~ CHANCES NOW! FIVE DOLLARS A POUND FROM HERE ON!

URAH DEARY! NOW, LISTEN! I NEED TWENTY POUNDS NEXT TIME! I'M HAVING A BANQUET! AND MY FRIENDS NEED TEN POUNDS! CAN YOU GET IT FOR US?



SOON, THE HORSEMEAT WASN'T ENOUGH! MR. BRISTLE HAD TO FIND OTHER SOURCES OF SUPPLY.

LOOK, BRISTLE! I'M SUPPOSED TO SELL THIS MEAT TO GOOD! IT'S TOO OLD FOR HUMAN CONSUMPTION! BEEN LAYING AROUND THE WAREHOUSE TOO LONG! NOW, FOR A PRICE...

AND NO POINTS?



NO POINTS, BRISTLE!

I'LL TAKE IT! BUT, NOT A WORD, UNDERSTAND? NOT A WORD TO ANYONE!



HEH, HEH! FIRST HORSEMEAT. NOW  
STALE MEAT? MR. CRISTLE CERTAINLY  
WAS SINKING LOWER AND LOWER! BUT NO ONE SUSPECTED  
WIDE MR. CRISTLE WHEN A FEW  
PEOPLE... THE POORER PEOPLE  
IN TOWN... WERE SERIOUSLY ILL!



HOW'S YOUR  
HUSBAND  
TODAY, MRS.  
HORTON?



BETTER, THANKS!  
NOW, I AIN'T  
SEEN FEELIN'  
TOD' GOOD!



BUT ONE NIGHT...

MR. CRISTLE  
ISN'T IN? HE'S  
OUT WALKING?



WE'LL JUST  
TELL 'IM HE  
CAN PICK UP  
ANOTHER  
LOAD OF THE  
SLOP!



THE... THE  
WHAT?



THE STALE MEAT? THE JUNK?  
THE STUFF HE'S BEEN SELLIN'  
AS GOOD STUFF? YOU KNOW!

OH? YES! I'LL  
T'LL TELL HIM!



TELL 'IM I GOT SOME  
HORSEMEAT FOR 'IM.  
TOD' 'BYE!



MRS. CRISTLE CLOSED THE DOOR AND STARED AT IT  
FOR A MINUTE! THEN SHE WENT OUT! SHE ARRIVED AT  
THE BUTCHER-SHOP A FEW MINUTES LATER...



HERE'S YOUR MEAT,  
MR. VANDERCLIFF!

THANKS  
BACH!

DON'T TAKE IT,  
MR. VANDERCLIFF!  
IT'S STALE... OLD!  
IT MAY BE HORSE-  
MEAT!

SARAH!

YEH, YEH! NOT THIS  
STUFF, MRS. CRISTLE!  
I PAY SIX BUCKS A  
POUND FOR THIS  
STUFF! SACH'S REGULAR  
CUSTOMERS GET THE JUNK!



SIX  
DOLLARS!  
BLACK  
MARKET!

BRIGHT KID, THIS SARAH? GUIDE WITH NUMBERS! BELLING PRICE \$\$\$! SIX DOLLARS TO HANDS OFF! BLACK MARKET! IT FIGURES! BUT SHE'S A GOOD KID, MRS. BRISTLE! SHE'S REAL MAD...



AFTER JACK'S CUSTOMER LEAVES... YOU'RE SELLING MEAT ON THE BLACK MARKET! YOU KEEP OUT OF THIS, SARAH!



AND YOU'RE PASSING OFF HORSE MEAT AND STALE MEAT TO YOUR CUSTOMERS FOR RED-POINTS? WE'RE GOING TO BE RICH, SARAH!



I DON'T WANT THAT KIND OF MONEY! MR. BOSTON WAS TERRIBLY SICK! WAS IT FROM FOUR MEAT?

PROBABLY! WHO CARES? ANYWAY, I WANT THE MONEY! AFTER THE WAR I'M GOING TO RETIRE! I'VE BOOKED AWAY SIX BRAND ALREADY!



YOU'VE GOT TO STOP THIS! IT'S AGAINST THE LAW!



HAVE! ASK OLD SHARK! HE'LL ASK ABOUT HIS SASSY ONE BUSINESS! FIND OUT ABOUT FINGER'S TIME WACKET! EVERYBODY'S DOIN' IT! WHY SHOULDN'T I?

YET MRS. BRISTLE WAS AWFUL MAD... BUT SHE COULDN'T TALK JACK OUT OF IT! HE WAS DETERMINED TO MAKE HIS PILE... NO MATTER HOW DIFFICULT!

...GOT A DEAL FOR YOU, BRISTLE! GOT SOME TASTED MEAT! REAL BAD! NO ONE'LL KNOW IT, THOUGH! GOT A PROCESS THAT COVERS IT UP! THEY WON'T FIND OUT TILL IT'S INSIDE 'EM! THEY'LL FEEL PRETTY BAD!

I NEED SOME POINTS QUICK! GOT A BIG ORDER TO FILL! GRAY! I'LL TAKE IT!



SO JACK BRISTLE BOUGHT THE SPOILED MEAT AND SOLD IT TO HIS CUSTOMERS...

MY SISTER-IN-LAW IS HERE FROM OUT OF TOWN! SHE'S AMAZED THAT WE CAN GET ALL THE MEAT WE WANT!

HAVE! JUST TRY TO DO MY BESS! MRS. BRISTLE! WHAT'LL IT BE?



HEH, HEH! DON'T TURN OVER THE PAGE TO SEE WHAT HAPPENS! YOU'LL GET TO IT! IT'S COMING! THE BEGINNING OF THE END COMES TO START RIGHT NOW! EEL FLOWERS FOR MRS. ASACROMBIE! WHAT KIND? WHY LILIES... OF COURSE! DEAD, I KNOW!

DID YOU HEAR? MRS. ASACROMBIE JUST DIED! POISONED! THEY THINK HER SISTER-IN-LAW DID IT!

POISONED? THEY'RE PERFORMING AN AUTOPSY RIGHT NOW!

I WOULD ME, MRS. GABBER! IF THAT'S ALL YOU WANT, I'D LIKE TO CLOSE UP!



MR. BRISTLE BROKE MRS. GABBER OUT OF THE STORE AND LOCKED IT UP! MR. BRISTLE WAS SCARED MR. BRISTLE WAS GOING TO GET THE ROAD... LEAVE TOWN... TAKE IT ON THE LAM...

HOWDY, ZACH! CLOSIN' UP EARLY, AIN'T CHA? SEASID OF THE MARIAG?

MARIAG? WHAT MARIAG?



WHY, THE ONE'S GOIN' AROUND POISONIN' EVERYONE! MRS. ASACROMBIE... AND MR. SHRO... AND MR. SHRO... AND OL' MAN BRUNN! ALL DEAD! WATCH YOURSELF GOIN' HOME, ZACH!

Y-YES! WELL! GOODNIGHT, PETE!



MR. BRISTLE RAN ALL THE WAY HOME! FIRST THING HE DID WHEN HE GOT THERE WAS TAKE HIS BLACK MARKET MONEY FROM ITS HIDING PLACE! ELEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS!

PACK YOUR THINGS... SARAH? WE'RE LEAVIN' TOWN!

YOU'RE IN TROUBLE! THEY FOUND OUT! I'LL WARNER YOU NOT TO SELL HORSEMEAT.



IT'S WORSE THAN THAT, SARAH! FOUR PEOPLE ARE DEAD ALREADY! I SOLD THEM TANKED MEAT!

YOU... YOU WHAT?





**I'LL BETTER, SARAH! CAN'T YOU HEAR? HE KILLED 'IM! HE SOLD 'EM POWDERED MEAT! AN' NOW IT'S SINKING INTO THAT FEMALE BRAIN! AN' THAT'S IT! GET MAG-FEET GOOD AND MAG-FEET...HER...**

**YOU'RE A MURDERER!**

**I DID IT FOR US... SARAH! FOR YOU AND ME AND... JUNIOR!**

**JUNIOR! HE'S EATING AT NERBIE NORTON'S HOUSE!**

**NORTON! SHE BOUGHT SOME OF IT!**

**AT THE MOMENT, JUNIOR STAGGERED INTO THE KITCHEN! HE LOOKED A LITTLE GREEN AROUND THE EYES!**

**I... I FEEL SICK NOWMY! I...**

**JUNIOR? BABY?**

**DUDE?**

**LITTLE JUNIOR COLLAPSED ON THE KITCHEN FLOOR. HE'S DEAD, EACH! DEAD!**

**YOU KILLED HIM, TOO... OUR SON... EH... EH... OUR SON**

**SARAH! PUT DOWN THAT KNIFE!**

**WHEN THEY UNLOCKED ZACH BRISTLE'S BUTCHER SHOP THE NEXT MORNING, THEY FOUND MRS. BRISTLE STANDING BEHIND THE COUNTER... STARING INTO SPACE! SHE WORE A BLOOD-SMEARED APRON AROUND HER NECK! BEFORE HER... IN THE MEAT SHOWCASE... ZACH BRISTLE HAD BEEN GLUMCISLY CARVED AND LAID OUT IN THE VARIOUS TRAYS...**

**GOOD LORD!**

**TAUNTED MEAT! TAUNTED MEAT ANYONE?**

**ALL RIGHT, SO YOU AIN'T HUNGRY? YOU CAN WINDOW SHOP, CAN'T YOU? NOT INTERESTED, EH? MAYBE YOU'D BE INTERESTED IN ATTENDING A FORMAL BANQUET GIVEN BY THE GHOULS, ZOMBIES, WEREWOLVES, AND VAMPIRE'S BLACK-MARKET-BOODIES SYNDICATE IN HONOR OF ZACH BRISTLE? HE WILL BE SERVED! MMM! STILL NOT INTERESTED, EH? HOW ABOUT COMING ON TO THE FAMILY-KEEPER THEM? HE'S NOT INTERESTING, TOO! GOT A BORING STORY FOR YOU! THEN I'LL DO YOU LATER WITH ANOTHER GREEPY-GRIFF-COLLECTOR'S-ITEM!**

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, HEN! WELCOME TO THE VAULT OF HORROR, FIENDS! YEP, IT'S YOUR HOST, THE VAULT-KEEPER, SHRIEKING! EVER HEAR OF MOUNTAIN CLIMBERS? SURE YOU HAVE! WELL, I'LL BET YOU'VE NEVER HEARD OF MOUNTAIN CRAWLERS... SOUTH AMERICAN VARIETY! MY STORY BONDERS OUT! I CALL THIS BRISTLING TALE OF TERROR...

## ROPED IN!



THE DOOR TO THE WALKER-ELIM, BUCKLEY, AND MORGAN CONSTRUCTION COMPANY SWINGS OPEN AND THE STRANGER ENTERS! HE LOOKS AROUND AND THEN STEPS UP TO THE RECEPTION DESK...

YES, SIR? WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

WILL YOU TELL MR. DONALD MORGAN TO STEP OUT HERE FOR A MOMENT? MY CREDENTIALS...



THE SECRETARY LOOKS DOWN AT THE STRANGER'S BLISTERING BADGE AND DASHES! SHE SWITCHES ON THE OFFICE INTER-COM AND WHISPERS...

MR. MORRAN! THERE'S A GENTLEMAN OUT HERE... TO SEE YOU!

HAVE HIM WAIT, MISS BALLEWINE! I'M BUSY...

HE... HE'S FROM THE POLICE DEPARTMENT, SIR?

OH? ALL RIGHT! I'LL BE RIGHT OUT!

DONALD MORRAN COMES OUT OF HIS OFFICE...

YES? WHAT IS IT?

MR. MORRAN, YOU WERE IN COMPLETE CHARGE OF THE CONTRACT FOR THE CITY HOSPITAL, WERE YOU NOT?

I **WAS!** I HANDLED THE ENTIRE CONSTRUCTION JOB MYSELF! WHY?

MR. MORRAN? YOU ARE UNDER ARREST!

WHAT? BUT... BUT THERE MUST BE SOME MISTAKE!

THERE'S NO MISTAKE, MR. MORRAN. THE UPPER FLOOR OF THE HOSPITAL COLLAPSED THIS MORNING. AN INVESTIGATION SHOWED THAT THE CONCRETE USED WAS SUB-STANDARD! ALMOST ALL SAID! BETTER COME ALONG QUICKLY!

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE! I ORDERED THAT CONCRETE MYSELF! I SPECIFIED THE MIXTURE! IT WAS A GOOD MIXTURE! NO! LET ME GO! I WON'T...

WHAT'S GOING ON HERE?

WHAT IS THE MEANING OF THIS?

MORRAN? WHAT DOES HE WANT?

I WANT HIM FOR HOMICIDE, GENTLEMEN! YOUR PARTNER, HERE, IS RESPONSIBLE FOR THE DEATHS OF TWENTY-ONE HOSPITAL PATIENTS!

WHAT? MORRAN? IS THIS TRUE?

NO! NO! THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE!



THE ONLY MISTAKE WAS THE ONE YOUR PARTNER MADE WHEN HE USED TOO LITTLE CONCRETE AND TOO MUCH SAND IN THAT HOSPITAL JOB HE HANDLED!

GOOD LORD!

MORGAN! THAT'S HOW THAT'S COULD YOU! HONEST, MORGAN!



ELLIS... WAGNER SURELY I BELIEVE WE'D DON'T DO THIS!...!

BETTER COME ALONG QUIETLY, MR. MORGAN! LET'S GO!

OH DEAR! OUR REPUTATION! THE SCANDAL!



AFTER MR. MORGAN MILED FROM THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY OFFICE BY THE DETECTIVE, MR. WAGNER, THE SENIOR PARTNER OF THE CONCERN, TURNS TO THE OTHER TWO...

GENTLEMEN! I... I THINK WE SHOULD HAVE A CONSULTATION IN MY OFFICE IMMEDIATELY!

Y-YES, MR. WAGNER!

OF COURSE, MR. WAGNER!



HEH, HEH! LOOKS LIKE MR. ELLIS, MR. MUCKLEBAND, MR. WAGNER ARE SHOCKED OVER THIS LATEST TURN OF EVENTS, ENLIGHTENED? LOOK AT 'EM... CHATTERING LIKE A BUNCH OF MONKEYS! THEY SEEM NICE AND RESPECTABLE, EH. THE KIND THAT ARE APPALLED BY DISHONESTY? WELL, COME ON IN AND LISTEN! YOU'LL BE SHOCKED...



THAT'S SURELY SCREAMING, NOW

HOW DO I KNOW IT WOULD COLLAPSE? THAT MIXTURE STOOD UP IN THAT SCHOOL JOB MORGAN HANDLED LAST YEAR.

SO FAR, THAT IS!



WHAT ARE YOU COMPLAINING ABOUT, ELLIS? YOU GOT A NICE FAT CHECK OF THE DOWN WE SAVED!

I'M NOT COMPLAINING! ONLY THEY'RE ON TO US NOW!



SO WHAT? WE'VE ONLY SUBSTITUTED CHEAP MATERIALS ON MORGAN'S JOBS! WE'LL TAKE THE BAIT! HE'S TRAPPED, TRAPPED IN A WEB OF DISHONESTY! STANTAL EVIDENCE!

WE'LL JUST KEEP ACTING SHOCKED AT THIS WHOLE DEAL! THEY'LL NEVER SUSPECT US!



YEP! THAT'S THE PICTURE, KIDDER! ELLIS, BUCKLEY, AND WAGNER HAVE BEEN TAKING THE HIGH GRADE CONSTRUCTION MATERIAL ORDERED BY MORGAN ON EVERY JOB HE'S HANDLED AND SUBSTITUTING CHEAP, INFERIOR GRADE STUFF! THEN THEY'VE BEEN POCKETING THE DIFFERENCE! POOR MORGAN IS RESPONSIBLE! YES, THEY'VE SPUN A NEAT LITTLE WEB OF EVIDENCE AROUND THE INCIDENT FOURTH PARTNER! NOW THE EVIDENCE IS BEING WEIGHED! LISTEN...



GENTLEMEN OF THE JURY! HAVE YOU REACHED A VERDICT?

WE HAVE, YOUR HONOR! WE FIND THE DEFENDENT, DONALD MORGAN, GUILTY OF MANSLAUGHTER!

NO! NO!



YES, DONALD! YES! THE WEB IS TIGHT! IT'S BEEN WOVEN WELL! YOU'RE DONE FOR...

I'M INNOCENT, I TELL YOU... INNOCENT!

TAKE HIM AWAY!



AT THE OFFICES OF THE WAGNER, ELLIS, AND BUCKLEY CONSTRUCTION COMPANY...

WHY THE SUDDEN MEETING, WAGNER?

IT HAS NOTHING TO DO WITH MORGAN GENTLEMEN!



DO YOU REMEMBER THAT BOLIVIAN CONTRACT WE BID ON? THE POWER PLANT AND DAM? WELL, WE GOT IT!

KNAPT! WHY THAT'S WORTH A FORTUNE! AND THERE'S ONLY THREE OF US TO SPLIT THE PROFITS NOW!



WHEN DO WE LEAVE, WAGNER?

TOMORROW! WE'RE FLYING DOWN... IN THE COMPANY'S PRIVATE PLANE!



AND SO, THE NEXT DAY, A SMALL FOUR-SEATER TAKES OFF FROM THE AIRPORT JUST OUTSIDE THE CITY... BOUND FOR LA PAZ, CAPITAL OF BOLIVIA...

POOR MORGAN! HE ALWAYS LOVED TO FLY WITH US! TOO BAD HE HAD TO MISS THIS TRIP!

HEH, HEH! YES! TOO BAD!



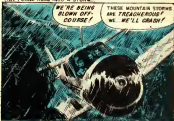
A WEEK LATER, THE CONSTRUCTION COMPANY'S PLANE IS WINNING ITS WAY SOUTH OVER THE ANDES MOUNTAINS...

NORTH OF LAKE TITICACA ON THE PERU-BOLIVIAN BORDER, THE TINY PLANE RUNS INTO A STORM.



WE OUGHT TO REACH LA PAZ BEFORE NIGHT FALL!

LOOK AT THOSE MOUNTAINS DOWN THERE! AREN'T THEY BEAUTIFUL!



WE'RE BEING BLOWN OFF-COURSE!

THESE MOUNTAIN STORMS ARE TREACHEROUS! WE... WE'LL CRASH!

THE STORM LASHES AT THE AIRPLANE, TORRING IT LIKE A FEATHER.

THE MOUNTAIN-TOP LOOKS UP BEFORE THE PLANE! WARNER STRUGGLES WITH THE CONTROLS.

THE THREE MEN IN THE PLANE STRAIN THEIR EYES, TRYING TO PIERCE THE GATHERING CLOUDS! SUDDENLY, AS A BOLT OF LIGHTNING FLASHES...



IT'S GETTING DARK! I CAN HARDLY SEE!

LOOK-OUT! THAT MOUNTAIN-TOP!



I CAN'T GET ANY ALTITUDE! WE'LL HAVE TO TRY GOING AROUND!



WE'RE FLYING BETWEEN TWO MOUNTAINS! GET UP HIGHER! GET UP HIGHER!

I CAN'T! I CAN'T!

THE SHOCK THROWS THE THREE MEN FORWARD! FOR A MOMENT, THE TINY PLANE VIBRATES CRAZILY.

WARNER PEERS OUT OF THE WINDOW! AS THE LIGHTNING FLASHES ONCE MORE, HE SCREAMS...



WHAT HAPPENED?

WE HIT SOMETHING!

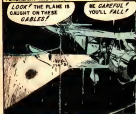
BUT... BUT WE DIDN'T CRASH!



WE'RE STILL BETWEEN THOSE TWO MOUNTAINS! WE'RE JUST HANGING IN MID-AIR!

WHAT? YOU'RE RIGHT!

SOON, THE STORM SUBSIDES! ELLIS TAKES A FLASHLIGHT AND OPENS THE PLANE DOOR...



LOOK! THE PLANE IS CAUGHT ON THESE CABLES!

BE CAREFUL! YOU'LL FALL!

ELLIS CLIMBS FROM THE TINY CRAFT... ONTO THE CABLE-LIKE STRUCTURE...



IT'S SOME SORT OF A NETWORK! I'M GOING TO CLIMB DOWN!

NO, ELLIS! WAIT TILL DAYLIGHT! YOU DON'T EVEN KNOW HOW HIGH UP WE ARE!

BUT ELLIS DOES NOT LISTEN! HE STARTS DOWN THE CABLE NETWORK! SOON, ONLY THE GLOW OF HIS FLASHLIGHT CAN BE SEEN.



ELLIS! COME BACK! YOU CRAZY FOOL!

SUDDENLY THE FLASHLIGHT-SLOW FLAMES OUT, AND THE NIGHT IS FILLED WITH A BLOOD-SUNDERING SILENCE OF HORROR...



WAAAAAH-UK-!

ELLIS!

GOOD LORD!

FROM INSIDE THEIR PLANE, WARNER AND BUCKLEY STARE INTO THE DARKNESS...



WHAT... WHAT COULD HAVE HAPPENED TO HIM? HE MUST HAVE FALLEN!

NOT HIS SCREAM DIDN'T FASE AWAY! IT WAS CUT SHORT! HE... HE SAW SOMETHING!

AS DAWN BREAKS WHEN THE ANDES, WARNER AND BUCKLEY BEHOLD A STRANGE AND TERRIFYING SIGHT! THEIR TINY PLANE HANGS ENTWINED IN THE STRANGE CABLE-NETWORK, HALFWAY BETWEEN THE SHEER SIDES OF TWO MOUNTAINS AND HIGH OVER THE VALLEY FLOOR...



LOOK! WE CAN CLIMB TO SAFETY! IT REACHES THE MOUNTAIN SIDES.

WAIT, BUCKLEY!

BUCKLEY MOVES OUT OVER THE CABLE NETWORK! WARNER HANGS BACK, A SENSATION OF TERROR COILING DOWN HIS SPINE.



C'MON, WARNER! YOU CAN'T STAY THERE TILL YOU STARVE!

I... I DON'T KNOW! I... I... OH, MY LORD...

THE GIANT Hairy THING DARTS DOWN THE NETWORK FROM BEYOND THE MOUNTAIN RIDGE! ITS EIGHT HUGE SPINY LEGS CARRY IT AT A BREATHTAKING SPEED! WARNER SCREAMS...

BUCKLY! LOOK OUT! IT'S A GIANT SPIDER!

AAAAAAEEEE!



WARNER SCAMPERS BACK INTO THE TRAPPED PLANE AND SLAMS THE DOOR! FROM A WINDOW HE WATCHES AS THE GIANT CRAWLING THING REACHES BUCKLY.

OH, LORD! IT'S DEVOURING HIM!



BUCKLY'S HYSTERICAL SHRIERS OF PAIN FINALLY SUBSIDE! THE HUGE SPIDER TURNS AND MOVES TOWARD THE PLANE...

NOW...NOW, IT...IT'S COMING TO GET ME!



THE GIANT SPIDER CROUCHES OVER THE TINY PLANE...WAITING FOR ITS TERRIFIED OCCUPANT TO EMERGE! IT WAITS PATIENTLY...HOURS AFTER HOUR...

I...I'M TRAPPED! TRAPPED! IT'S JUST SITTING THERE...WAITING FOR ME...



BACK IN THE UNITED STATES, THE WARDEN AND THE DOCTOR STARE DOWN AT DONALD MORGAN! HE SITS IN THE CORNER OF HIS CELL...MUTTERING...

WHILE HIGH IN THE ANDES, MORGAN'S EX-BUSINESS ASSOCIATE IS SUFFERING THE SAME FATE! HE, TOO, IS OUT OF HIS MIND...

HE'S BEYOND HOPE, WARDEN! A COMPLETE MENTAL BREAKDOWN!

STIR CRAZY!



TH...OH...OH... SPIDER...OH... WAITING...OH... FOR ME...OH...OH...



REN, REN? YEP! SO AFTER WARNER, ELLIS AND BUCKLY TRAPPED MORGAN IN A WEB OF EVIDENCE, THEY WERE TRAPPED IN ONE THEMSELVES...A REAL WEB. THAT IS! I SUPPOSE YOU'RE WONDERING IF A SPIDER LIKE THAT REALLY EXISTS? WELL, NEXT TIME YOU SEE A LOCAL SPIDER, ASK IT IF IT EVER HEARD OF THE SOUTH AMERICAN MOUNTAIN CRAWLER! IT'LL PROBABLY GOOL UP AND DIE AT THE MERE MENTION OF ITS NAME! 'BYE, NOW!





# E.C. FANS!

**UNDOUBTEDLY THE ZANZIEST  
10¢ WORTH OF IDIOTIC  
NONSENSE YOU COULD EVER  
HOPE TO BUY! TRY IT...  
JUST FOR LAUGHS!**



Ramsay squeezed the trigger and felt the pistol buck violently in his hand. The young native guide in front of him spun around and crashed headlong into the heavy foliage.

"I don't need him any longer," Ramsay muttered as he slipped his gun back into its holster and stepped around the body sprawled beside the crude trail. "Now that he's revealed the hiding place of his people's treasure, I can go the rest of the way myself. As soon as I crack open the tomb where these superstitious savages buried their loot, a fortune in diamonds and rubies is mine!"

3 hours later... 3 grueling hours of incessant hacking through the matted underbrush... Ramsay staggered into a grassy clearing. Before him, rising grey and ominous as the guide had predicted, towered the mountain where the treasure of Molokko Island was hidden. A half-million dollars, intended as a sacrifice to primitive gods, was sealed up in these rocks!

The fatigue of the long trek from the coast... the painful lunging over razor-backed ridges and through evilly-sucking swamps... was forgotten by Ramsay in that moment of ecstasy. Here... somewhere along the base of this craggy mountain... was the secret entrance to a sacrificial chamber which housed a king's ransom!

The sun had begun fading when Ramsay found the cryptic designs carved into the stone. A warning, the



guide had whispered, that doom awaited anyone who dared invade the sanctity of the mountain! The only one who's perished because of that foul curse, Ramsey sneered, was the guide, himself!

In a few minutes he had jammed a dozen sticks of dynamite into fissures beside the sealed entrance. From a distance, protected by a huge boulder, Ramsey heard the shattering blast and saw tons of rock shower in every direction. When the dust had settled he raced toward the gaping hole now revealed in the mountain's side... even from this distance he could see the glimmer of precious stones within the tomb. It was all his...

A deep rumble made him stop in his tracks. The ground began to tremble wildly... far above, the mountaintop was disintegrating before his eyes! Flames leaped madly toward the clouds... hissing black lava gushed torrentially down upon him...

Before Ramsey, in his terror, could see across the grassy clearing, the searing liquid was upon him. Like fiery tar it bubbled around his legs, searing the tortured skin and tearing it loose in raw shreds. Pain stabbed instantly through his body, from head to toe... he felt stifling heat filling his organized lungs, choking his breath in his throat.

The treasure... a thought flickered through his brain as he felt himself dissolving in that blanketing sea of molten lava... buried in the side of a VOLCANIC MOUNTAIN! Dynamite... activated it...

The scorching lava rolled on, and in its midst Ramsey's body turned molten hot... simmered and split like meat boiled in a blast-furnace...



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# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

So, now you know! So maybe my two idiot editors won't be commiserating large portions of my column any more to make some ridiculous announcement about E.C.'s latest money grubbing effort! A couple of pages back, you probably saw the cover of the first issue of the most recent addition to the J.C. trash heap! MAD, they call it! You'd be MAD if you BOUGHT it! Of all the maddening things, this new mag is actually FUNNY... eh...! How disgusting can one get? When I reluctantly agreed to be myself up with this massable outfit, and allowed my Tales from the Crypt to be published in the form of comic magazines, I never in my gorilla days dreamed that I would be in any way associated with funny-type magazines! Imagine a "comic" being COMIC! (Not C.K.! There's a HORROR story in "MAD"! —ed.) Who sells it? Does Y.K. sell it? Does O.W. sell it? DO I TELL IT? WHO TELLS IT? (Harvey Kattman tells it! —ed.) THERE! THAT'S WHAT I MEAN! What does that WAR MONGER know about HORROR? Where does POW, K.A. BLAMM, WHOGGH Kattman come off writing horror stories! (Not this! A different C.K.! This is a FUNNY horror story! Why, we nearly died! —ed.) NEARLY, eh? Die the hell! And anyway, who ever heard of a FUNNY HORROR story! (Not C.K.! Your boy, Jack Davis, does it! —ed.) THERE! THAT'S WHAT I MEAN! What does... WHO? (Jack Davis! —ed.) JACK... eh... DAVIS! MY son BOY? (There, there, C.K.! No more! —ed.) How... how could he do this to me! (Simple! He offered me MONEY! —ed.) RUINING HIM... THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE DOING... RUINING HIM! DEAD BODIES AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH? PICKLED WEREWOLF KNUCKLES AREN'T GOOD ENOUGH? VAMPIRE GHOUFLASH (HUNGARIAN STYLE) ISN'T GOOD ENOUGH? You have to spell him with MONEY! (You do however your way... we'll do business our way! —ed.) I QUIT! (Now, now! The CONTRACT! Remember? —ed.) Hm...! (That's better! Now go on with your column! —ed.) Ah, yes! The column! Well, let's look at some mail!

Dear Crypt Keeper,

I suppose by now you've discovered the mistake you made in Tales from the Crypt No. 30, and have received hundreds of corrective letters. But to one you haven't, you said that the gold miners sailed around the Cape of Good Hope which is in Africa, when you obviously meant Cape Horn in South America.

E. Kewenagh  
N. Bergen, N.J.

In your last story, I found a big mistake. It said, "...water hungry citizens'd taken chopper ships, rounding the Cape of Good Hope in' boats..." Of course the fact that the Cape of Good Hope is in Africa shouldn't matter much except that they would

have landed in India. Most of them didn't go around Cape Horn anyway! They went to the leftmost of Panama, crossed on foot to the other side, and got a boat which was waiting for them.

James Hayden  
Yonkers, N.Y.

In "Ghastly Promises" you wrote that the gold miners went around the Cape of Good Hope. This facility seems possible near and Cape is at the northern tip of Africa. Was this a mistake or a geographical error?

Daniel A.V. Vandrab  
Dubuque, Iowa

All right, already! So I made a mistake! So what? I want! I should know geography! Besides, my idiot editors should have caught the mistake! (Is WB should know geography? —ed.) (I know geography! —Harvey Kattman!) WAR MONGER!

Dear Crypt Keeper,

Probably you didn't think your horror stories would strike long residents across the Atlantic in such character. I'd be most happy to see them. I take the opportunity to say that you are the best horror and terror writer I've ever read. Let's hope that your little embassies of horror (your magazines) keep coming to you! (then please) keep them here, if only to keep me entertained!

Allen Corwell  
London, England

Hiway! We eat in bloody cocken, by love, and all that sort of real. It's been badly waving from you. Al, old boy!

Dear Crypt Keeper,

Your stories are the most amazing, the most repulsive, the most disgusting stories I have ever read. When I read your magazine I get sick to my stomach. I'm not alone in this opinion. All my friends think the same thing. Keep up the good work.

Warren Gilman  
Worcester, Conn.

My friends think so too, Matt!

Dear C.K.,

I would be most pleased if you would send me the set of photographs I've devoted to and it is, and that's the good. I'm not I know. Enclosed is the postal fee required. Gratefully

Edwin Hammarley  
San Francisco, Cal.

For any of you other grateful readers who are looking for a way out, be advised that first by seven autographed photograph reproductions of Y.K., O.W., and myself are still available... and will be for some time! So there's no rush! Mail your quarter or complete five hundred copies of Tales of Terror looking around you. Likewise two hard Subscriptions... full year... six months... or less... in coin of the realm to my wallet head! Send complaints, compliments, personal orders, T. of T. orders, subscription orders, and other orders (make mine on file) to:

The Crypt Keeper  
Box 106, Dept. 33  
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N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

READ OF THE STARK HORROR  
TWO MEN FOUND IN A GAME OF  
**CUTTING  
CARDS!**



THIS STORY IS PROBABLY THE MOST HORRIBLE, BLOOD-CURDLING TALE YOU WILL EVER READ! IT CONCERNS TWO PROFESSIONAL GAMBLERS... BUS FORNEY AND LOU ORNIGRATED. BUS-TIME GAMBLERS LIKE BUS AND LOU...ARE IN A CLASS BY THEMSELVES! GAMBLING IS THEIR LIFE! THE WAGER THE BET...IS THEIR BLOOD! BUT BUS FORNEY AND LOU ORNIGRATED EACH OTHER...HATED EACH OTHER LIKE POISON...

THERE ISN'T ENOUGH ROOM IN THIS TOWN FOR BOTH OF US, LOU!

I'M NOT LEAVING, BUS! SO, GOOD-BYE... GET ON YOUR HORSE...



I MEAN THERE ISN'T ENOUGH ROOM IN THIS WHOLE WORLD FOR BOTH OF US, LOU! AND I'M WILLIN' TO GAMBLE TO SEE WHO LEAVES IT!

YOU'RE PLUFFING, BUS! CARRY! YOU'RE ON! SHALL WE DRAW? HIGH CARD HAND! THE LOSER DIES! THE CHOICE OF METHOD IS HIS!





GUS STARED DOWN AT THE CARDS FANNED OUT BEFORE HIM! THE ODDS WERE SIXTEEN TO ONE AGAINST HIS PICKING ONE OF THE THREE REMAINING AGES! HE SPUN A CARD OVER...



GUS TOOK HIS REVOLVER FROM THE DRAWER AND REMOVED ALL BUT ONE BULLET FROM ITS SIX CHAMBERS...



LOU TOOK THE SIX-SHOT REVOLVER AND TWIRLED THE CHAMBER...



GUS TOOK THE REVOLVER! HE LIFTED THE BARREL TO HIS TEMPLE! THE ODDS WERE FIVE TO ONE...





GUS HANDED THE GUN TO LOU! LOU PLACED THE MUZZLE AGAINST HIS HEAD! ODDS NOW... FOUR TO ONE



GUS TOOK THE GUN! BEADS OF PERSPIRATION BEGAN TO POP OUT ON THE TWO GAMBLERS' FACES! GUS POINTED THE REVOLVER! ODDS... THREE TO ONE...



LOU TOOK THE GUN! THERE WERE THREE SHOTS LEFT NOW! ONE OF THEM HAD THAT BULLET! ODDS... TWO TO ONE...



LOU SMILED IN RELIEF AND MOVED HIS BROW! GUS'S HAND SHOOK A LITTLE AS HE RAISED THE GUN! HE HESITATED! IT WAS EVEN MONEY NOW! HIS FINGER TWITCHED... THEN CLOSED...



GUS GRINNED! LOU STARED AT THE GUN! THE ODDS HAD RUN OUT! THE BULLET WAS LEFT! GUS HANDED THE WEAPON OVER...

HEH, HEH! TOO BAD, LOU! SHORE?



LOW LIFTED THE GUN AND STEELER HIMSELF FOR THE DEATH BLOW AS THE BULLET CAME CRASHING INTO HIS BRAIN! HE SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER...



WHAT?  
IT... IT  
DIDN'T GO  
OFF!

A... A DUD? WHY, YOU DIRTY... YOU KNEW IT ALL THE TIME! THAT'S WHY YOU WANTED TO GO FIRST! YOU THOUGHT I'D DRAW!



DON'T BE AN IDIOT, LOW! YOU TWIRLED THE CHAMBER! NOW DID I KNOW IT WOULD COME UP LAST?

YOU CAN'T TALK YOUR WAY OUT OF THIS ONE, GUD! NO MATTER WHEN IT CAME UP, YOU HAD A **SURE THING!**



ARE YOU ACCUSING ME... GUD FORNEY OF CHEATING?

YOU CAN HEAR! LUCKY I'M AN HONEST GAMBLER WHO'S NEVER HAD TO GO OUT! BUT I NEVER WELSH WHEN I LOSE!



OKAY, GUDS! IF YOU'RE SUCH A BIG-SHOT GAMBLER... THEN YOU'LL ACCEPT MY CHALLENGE!

YOU BEEN NAME IT?



NOBODY CALLS GUD FORNEY A CHEAT! GUDS... I CHALLENGE YOU TO A GAME OF **CHOP-POKER!**

OKAY, YOU DRUM! YOU'RE ON!



TO A FINISH! CALL YOUR DOCTOR! I'LL GET MINE!



THEN, FIELDS, BEGAN THE MOST HORRIBLE CARD GAME IN THE HISTORY OF MODERN GAMBLING! YOU'VE HEARD OF STRIP POKER? WELL... CHOP POKER IS ALMOST LIKE THAT! ONLY INSTEAD OF LOSING AN ARTICLE OF CLOTHING... YOU LOSE A **LIFE!** CHOP POKER HAD BEEN PLAYED BEFORE... IT WAS TOLD... BUT ONLY **ONCE!** AND AT A TIME NEVER... TO A **FINISH!**



THEY SAT AT THE GREEN FELT-COVERED TABLE BENEATH THE GLARING LAMP! THE HEAT CLEAVER SPARKLED BETWEEN THEM! GUS DEALT THE CARDS...



LOU PICKED UP THE CLEAVER AND STOOD OVER GUS...



GUS STRETCHED OUT HIS HAND! HIS PERSONAL DOCTOR MOVED FORWARD INTO THE LIGHT! LOU RAISED THE CLEAVER AND BROUGHT IT DOWN...



IT WAS LIKE A FRODO BAGGINS! THE DOCTORS WERE THE SECOND! TIME WAS TAKEN OUT WHILE GUS'S SECOND SERVICEMAN! THE BARBARE WAS BLOTTED RED WHEN THEY BEGAN AGAIN...



LOU DEALT THE CARDS! THEY DISCARDED... THEN...





GUS PICKED UP THE CLEAVER IN HIS GOOD HAND!  
LOU'S SECOND HAND MOVED INTO THE LAMPLIGHT...



WHICH ONE, LOU?

THE... THE  
FOUR... GUS!

AGAIN TIME WAS TAKEN OUT WHILE LOU'S SECOND  
SERVICED HIM! SOON, THE CARDS WERE SHUFFLED  
ONCE MORE...



LET'S GO, GUS!  
YOU DEAL!

CUT, IN,  
LOU!

LOU STRETCHED OUT HIS LEFT HAND! GUS TOOK  
CAREFUL AIM...



DUUUUUUUUUH!

THUNK!

HEH, HEH! YEP, KIDDIES! THAT'S HOW THE GAME WAS  
PLAYED! IT CONTINUED ON LIKE THAT... FAR INTO  
THE NIGHT! AS EACH HAND WAS PLAYED AND WON...



GOOOOOOOOOO!

ZUNG!

BUT LOU AND GUS NEVER DID  
PLAY CHOP FORTS TO A  
FINISH! OH, YEA! THEY PLAYED  
ALL NIGHT AND INTO THE NEXT  
DAY! BUT THEY HAD TO QUIT  
TOMORROW EVENING! SEEMS THAT  
NEITHER OF THEM COULD  
DEAL THE CARDS!



WHAT? YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME? WELL, LET'S LOOK IN ON THIS  
HOSPITAL ROOM! LOU AND GUS ARE IN THERE... STILL GAMBLING...



GO AHEAD! IT'S  
FOUR MONEY!

SO PASS THE CHEWING GUM!  
I WANT TO JUMP YOU!

THE  
END

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

PEANUTS, POPCORN... HEH, HEH! YEP, IT'S YOUR FEEDER OF FOUL FABLES... THE OLD WITCH... COOKIN' AGAIN! GOT A CIRCUS RECIPE FOR YOU THIS TIME! ELEPHANT STEAK BARRISHED WITH CRUSHED TAP-BARK! I GOT THE IDEA FROM THE STORY I'M ABOUT TO TELL YOU! I CALL THIS BARBLED BRABBLING OF BORE...

## SQUASH... ANYONE?

FOR A MOMENT, THE CROWD UNDER THE BIG TOP WAS DEATHLY SILENT! THEN, FROM THE BARRICADE, A DRUM BEGAN TO ROLL... ITS SHINING BRACARDS OF ANTICIPATION GROWING LOUDER AND LOUDER! IN THE CENTER OF THE RING, THE HARE ELEPHANT LIFTED A MASSIVE "POWELL" THE BOASTFULLY GLAD WOMAN BEQUEATHED ON THE TANGAREE FLOOR! THE ELEPHANT TRAINER MARKED ORDERS! THE RINGMASTER ANNOUNCED...

AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, FOR THE MOST DEATH-DEFYING FEAT EVER PRESENTED UNDER THE BIG TOP...



THE WOMAN WHISPERED UNDER THE MAMMOTH UPRAISED FOOT OF THE ELEPHANT! THE TRAINER SHOUTED ABOVE THE DRUM-ROLL'S RISING CROSCENDO! THE ELEPHANT THUMPED, CURLING ITS TRUNK...



EIGHT THOUSAND POUNDS... LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! ONE SLIP... AND IT MEANS CERTAIN DEATH! WATCH.

THE GIRL STARED UP AT THE HUGE HOOF! IT WAS DIRECTLY OVER HER FACE! THE TRAINER BARKED AN ORDER! THE SOLIATH LOWERED ITS UPRAISED FORELEGS! THE DRUM-ROLL THICKENED...



THE ELEPHANT HOOF TOUCHED THE WOMAN'S NOSE! A CRYAL CRASHED.



THE TRAINER AND THE GIRL BOWED AGAIN AND AGAIN! THE CROWD CHEERED...



THE ELEPHANT ACT WAS OVER! THE CIRCUS BAND STRUCK UP A HAPPY MARCH, AND THE CLOWNS SWEEP OUT ACROSS THE ARENA! THE TRAINER AND THE GIRL DISAPPEARED THROUGH THE EXIT-WAY...



OMMA WAS GOOD! I HAVE TONIGHT, WILD! HER TRAINED HER FOOT WAS STEADY! WELL, RENÉ! DIDN'T YOU THINK THEY APPALLED MORE THAN USUAL, TO-NIGHT?

THE COUPLE MOVED ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS TO A TRAILER! THE LETTERS PAINTED UPON IT WERE BIG AND IMPRESSIVE! 'WILD WORLD'S GREATEST ELEPHANT TRAINER!'

NOW WOULD YOU LIKE TO RIDE INTO TOWN TONIGHT, WILD?

NOT TONIGHT, RENÉ! I'M TIRED.



THE INSIDE OF THE TRAILER WAS CROWDED AND MESSY! COLORFUL COSTUMES LAY STREWN ABOUT! BOOKS AND MAGAZINES SPRAWLED ON EVERY AVAILABLE SURFACE...

NOT TONIGHT! NOT TONIGHT! THAT'S ALL I HEAR! WELL, I'M NOT STAYING AROUND RIGHT AFTER NIGHT, NOT IN THIS DUMP!

I'M NOT STOPPING YOU FROM GOING INTO TOWN, RENÉ!



THE WOMAN SLIPPED OUT OF HER COUNTY COSTUME AND INTO A STREET-DRESS.

A NEED OF A MARRIAGE  
DIDN'T I WANT AS WELL  
HE MARRIED TO YOUR  
ELEPHANT?

THEN  
GIVE ME  
NE, RENÉ!

OH, NO! NOT THAT  
EASY, BIG BOY!  
YOU'RE STUCK  
WITH ME! I'D  
NEVER GIVE  
YOU A DIVORCE  
WITHOUT A FIGHT!  
IT'S COST YOU  
PLENTY...

OH, RENÉ!  
DEAF!  
WE'VE BEEN  
ALL THROUGH  
THIS BEFORE!

RENÉ SLAMMED THE DOOR OF  
THE TRAILER IN ANGER AS SHE  
LEFT FROM BEYOND, IN THE  
SHADOWS, A FIGURE WATCHED HER  
ENTER THE CAR...

AS SOON AS RENÉ'D DRIVEN OFF, THE FIGURE  
MOVED OUT OF THE SHADOWS! IT WAS A WOMAN!  
SHE STARTED TOWARD MILD'S TRAILER.

LEETA! DARLING!

OH, MILD!

THEY CLUNG TO EACH OTHER FOR A FEW MOMENTS!  
THEN...

DID YOU TELL  
HER ABOUT ME?

NO! IT'S NO USE! SHE'S NEVER  
GIVE ME A DIVORCE! I KNOW!  
WE'LL HAVE TO RUN AWAY!

LEETA LOOKED AT MILD! A FLASH OF EVIL GLISTENED  
IN HER TAMPESTUOUS EYES.

WHAT! WHAT IF THERE  
WERE A TERRIBLE ACCIDENT?  
WHAT IF HANE WERE KILLED?

LEETA!  
WHAT ARE YOU  
SAYING?

EMMA COULD SLIP, MY  
DARLING! DON'T YOU SEE  
HOW EASY IT COULD BE?

NO! EMMA  
WOULD NOT SLIP!  
SHE'S WELL  
TRAINED! SHE  
WOULD NOT PUT  
HER FOOT DOWN  
UNTIL I SIGNALLED  
HER.



AND IF YOU DID  
SIGNAL HER?

IT... IT WOULD  
BE MURDER...  
LEETA!



EXACTLY, MY  
DARLING! AND NO  
ONE WOULD EVER  
KNOW! YOU COULD  
ACT SHOCKED...  
BLAME IT ON EMMA...  
CLAIM THAT SHE  
DISOBEYED YOU...

I'D HAVE TO  
HAVE HER  
SHOT!



YOU COULD TRAIN  
ANOTHER, MY DARLING!  
NEW WIFE... NEW  
ELEPHANT... A  
WHOLE NEW LIFE  
FOR YOU...

I... I  
DON'T  
KNOW! I  
JUST  
DON'T  
KNOW...



LEETA'S EYES BURNED! HER FACE DARKENED...

IT'S THAT, ON ME, MILO! I'M NOT  
CUT OUT FOR THIS... THIS SECRET  
MEETING NONSENSE! I WANT  
YOU... ALL THE TIME... OR  
NOT AT ALL!

GIVE ME A  
CHANCE TO THINK  
IT OVER, LEETA!  
PLEASE!



LEETA SMILED! SHE PURSED HER LIPS... RUNNING  
HER HAND THROUGH MILO'S HAIR...

OF COURSE, MY DARLING! TILL  
TOMORROW NIGHT'S PERFORM-  
ANCE! IF IT DOESN'T HAPPEN  
THEN...

LEETA  
BABY...

THE NEXT EVENING, MILO AND RENE STOOD IN THE  
ENTRANCE WAS TO THE BIG TOP, AWAITING THEIR  
CUE. MUSIC, EMMA TRUMPETED SOFTLY. SHE SEEMED  
TO SENSE THAT SOMETHING WAS WRONG.



THERE, THERE, GIRL! EMMA  
SEEMS NERVOUS TONIGHT.  
MILO?

SHE'S ALL RIGHT...  
C'MON! THERE'S OUR  
CUE!



THE FANFARE SILENCED THE CROWD! THE RING-  
MASTER INTRODUCED THE ACT AS THE SPOT-LIGHT  
SHINED TO THE BOWING PERFORMERS...

AND NOW... MILO, THE GREATEST ELEPHANT  
TRAINER IN THE WORLD... AND HIS WONDER-  
ELEPHANT, EMMA, ASSIGNED BY THAT DEATH-  
DEFYING BEAUTY... RENE...

THE DRUM BEGAN ITS ANXIOUS ROLL ONCE MORE! WILD BARRIED AN ORDER AND EMMA LIFTED HER FOOT! REAR HOT DOWN ON THE RING-FLOOR AND BRISTLED BELOW IT...



THE THUNDER OF THE ROLLING DRUM GREW LOUDER AND LOUDER! EMMA'S HOOF HUNG MENACINGLY ABOVE RENE'S WHITE FACE! WILD BARRIED AN ORDER AND THE HUGE FOOT LOWERED SLOWLY...



FOR A MOMENT, EMMA'S GIANTIC HOOF TOUCHED RENE'S WHITE FACE! THE DRUM ROLL REACHED ITS CRESSENDO...



AS THE CROWD CHARGED, WILD SHOUTED AT EMMA! RENE SCREAMED!



THE SCREAM CAME TOO LATE! EMMA WAS WELL-TRAINED AND RESPONDED IMMEDIATELY! WILD WATCHED IN HORROR AS EIGHT THOUSAND FORMS DESCENDED ON RENE'S FEAR-TWISTED FACE.



EMMA TRUMPETED LOUDLY! SHE REARED UP... CRUTCHING! FOR A MOMENT, THE STERRED AUDIENCE WAS SHOOKED BY THE VERY SOUND! THEN SOMEONE WHISPERED... PANDEMONIUM BROKE LOOSE! WILD HOLLED HORRIBLY!



TWO GUARDS RUSHED FORWARD! THEY FIRED AT THE RED-EYED PANDYBORN. SMYTTING THEIR GUNS INTO HER TIGHT PAIR! THE CROWD SCREAMED AND SHOUTED, AS IT MOVED FOR THE EXIT...



EMMA SWAYED AND TOPPLED OVER ON HER SIDE. DEAD! THE CIRCUS BAND BLARED IN DISCORD, ATTEMPTING TO RESTORE ORDER! THE RING-MASTER RUSHED TO WILD AS HE STARED DOWN AT RENE'S CRUSHED REMAINS IN UTTER REVOLUTION...



DON'T...DON'T LOOK AT HER, WILD! IT...IT'S HORRIBLE!

RENE! SOB, RENE!

THEY LED WILD TO THE EXIT-WAY HE WAS SOBING SOFTLY! BUT THAT NIGHT... FAR FROM THE CIRCUS GROUNDS...HE AND LETA LAUGHED TOGETHER...

IT WAS SO SIMPLE, DARLING! SO SIMPLE!

I TOLD YOU, WILD! I TOLD YOU IT WOULD BE!



WILD WAS FREE NOW...FREE OF RENE FOREVER! HE AND LETA MADE PLANS...

WE'LL WAIT A FEW MONTHS...JUST TO MAKE IT LOOK GOOD...AND THEN WE'LL BE MARRIED!

AND I'LL BEGIN TRAINING ANOTHER ELEPHANT!



FROM NOW ON, IT'S SMOOTH SAILING FOR US, WILD!

O'WINE, BABY!



IT DIDN'T TAKE LONG FOR WILD TO TRAIN A NEW ELEPHANT TO TAKE EMMA'S PLACE! WITHIN A YEAR THE ACT WAS AGAIN THRILLING AUDIENCES...

...WILD...WITH HIS WONDER-ELEPHANT, BESSIE, ASSISTED BY THAT DEATH-DEFYING BEAUTY...LETA!



THE CIRCUS RETURNED TO THE TOWNS WHERE THE HORRIBLE 'ACCIDENT' HAD HAPPENED ONE YEAR PREVIOUSLY! THE NIGHT OF THE OPENING PERFORMANCE, WILD AND LETA STOOD BESIDE BESSIE, AWAITING THEIR CUE...

I'LL BE GLAD WHEN 'DON'T FEAR' WEEK IS OVER AND 'DON'T WE LEAVE THIS BESSIE! ABOUT HERE IS BORNED HERE! AND EMMA... DARLING!



THE OLD PANSARE BLARED! THE SPOT-LIGHT DROVE TO THE ENTRANCE-WAY TO PICK THEM UP! A DISTANT SHRILL TRUMPETING SOUNDED.

STEADY, BESSIE, BABY!

GASP! THAT WASN'T BESSIE, WILD! I...I...



THE LOW RUMBLING THAT BOARED INTO THE NIGHT DID NOT COME FROM THE SAND-STATUE A COLUMN DARTED ACROSS THE ARMS, DISCOMFING.

I SAW THEM... MILD?  
I SAW THEM! WHAT  
OF ITS



IT BURST THROUGH THE EXIT-WAY ACROSS THE TARNARK FLOOR! IT TRUMPETED SHRELLY! THE STENCH FILLED THE BIG-TOPT! ITS ROILING HOOF PELL AWAY IN SLURRY GLODS AS IT MOVED! HERE AND THERE, WHITERED BONES PROTRUDED THROUGH ITS MASSIVE COVERED FLESH! PERCHED ON THE REMAINS OF ITS HEAD SAT THE DECAYED FIGURE OF A WOMAN, URSING IT ON...

EMMA...AND RENÉ!



IT LUMBERED TOWARD THE HORRIFIED TANNER AND HIS NEW WIFE. THE THING, ITS HEAD POINTING WILDLY.



IT WAS TOO LATE FOR MILD TO MOVE... TOO LATE TO RUN! THE THING WAS UPON HIM... LIFTING HIM IN ITS PAUL-SWELLING, DECOMPOSING TRUMP! LECTA WAS CAUGHT BENEATH ONE OF ITS HUGE ROTTED HOOF.

EEEEEEEEEE... AAAAAAAA...



MILD WAS FLUNG TO THE FAR-BARR WITH THE FORCE OF A TWENTY-STORY FALL! LECTA WAS CRUSHED FLAT.

THEN, AS THE SCREAMS SUBSIDED AND DEATH CAME TO MILD AND LECTA, THE HUGE THING AND THE HUMAN-THING UPON IT SEEMED TO JUST FALL AWAY INTO A PILE OF PUTRESCENT SLIME.

PEANUTS, POPCORN, PUTRESCENT SLIME! HEY, LADY! BUY YER BRAT A BAG OF PUTRESCENT SLIME! HEE HEE! YEP! THAT'S M'WALE, RIDGES! RENÉ AND EMMA GOT THEIR REVENGE, AND MILD AND LECTA GOT DIEDIES TOO! BY THE WAY I'M SELLING COTTON-GANDY! GOT A WHOLE FRANK-FULL! REEHEE! WHAT ROTTEN-TASTING STUFF! BYE, NOW WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE VAULT-KEEPER'S MAG THE MOULDS OF HORROR!





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NO. 34  
FEB.-MAR.

# TALES



REPRINT  
EDITION

FROM THE

# CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

IN THIS ISSUE:

E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY

**RAY BRADBURY**

AMERICA'S TOP HORROR WRITER!



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! BACK AGAIN, I SEE! BACK FOR MORE CHILLS IN TALES FROM THE CRYPT? WELCOME, THEN! WELCOME TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! IT'S YOUR MOST IN-HORROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO GURGLE YOUR BLOOD WITH ANOTHER GREEK'S COLLECTOR'S ITEM! SO COME IN! IN THIS YARN, YOU WILL BE THE MAIN CHARACTER! OH, YOU'D LIKE THAT? WELL, WE'LL SEE! EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS WILL BE SEEN THROUGH YOUR... THE MAIN CHARACTER'S... EYES! READY? THEN START LIVING THE TALE I CALL...

**MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE WALL!**



YOU OPEN YOUR EYES, AND THE GLARING LIGHT OVERHEAD BLINDS YOU! SUDDENLY YOU REALIZE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN UNDER A SWIRLING SEA OF DARKNESS AND HAVE ONLY NOW COME TO THE SURFACE! A GREY HAZE HANGS OVER YOU... BUT SOON EVEN THAT GLAZES AWAY LIKE COBBERS BRING SWIFT ASIDE BY A FASTERLY WELDED CUSTY! THINGS COME INTO FOCUS! JELLED OBJECTS SLOWLY FREEZE INTO SOLIDITY! A FIGURE RINGS OVER YOU, SHIELDING THE OVERHEAD GLARE FROM YOUR LIGHT-SENSITIVE EYES.



CAN YOU... CAN YOU SEE ME?  
NOO YOUR READ IF YOU CAN!

YOU RISE YOUR HEAD, LOOKING UP AT THE FIGURE BEENDING OVER YOU! HIS READY LITTLE EYES GAWGE BEHIND THICK CRYSTAL-LIKE GLASSES! HE SINGS...

I KNOW IT! I KNOW I COULD DO IT! OH, WE WILL BE FAMOUS! YOU AND I! THE WORLD WILL FLOOR TO SEE US!



YOU LOOK AROUND! YOU ARE IN A SMALL INSTRUMENT-CLUTTERED ROOM! GLASS CABINETS FILLED WITH TEST-TUBES LINE THE WALLS! STRANGE SHAPED MACHINES SURROUND YOU! THE FIGURE STANDING OVER YOU PATS YOUR CHEST REASSURINGLY.

DON'T TRY TO MOVE! JUST LIE THERE! CAN YOU TALK? CAN YOU SAY ANYTHING?



YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH! SOMEWHERE BACK UNDER THAT SEA OF BLACKNESS YOU HAVE JUST RISEN FROM IS THE MEMORY OF SPEECH! YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH, BUT ONLY A CHOKING GURGLE SPILLS OUT...

THAT'S ALL RIGHT! DO NOT WORRY! YOU WILL TALK AGAIN! I WILL TEACH YOU! NOW... REST...



THE FIGURE WITH THE THICK GLASSES TURNS TO GO! HE MOVES THROUGH THE APPARATUS-CROWDED ROOM TO A DOOR AND OPENS IT! HE REACHES FOR A LIGHT SWITCH...

I WILL BE BACK... LATER! I MUST GO OUT FIRST! NOW! IT IS TIME TO GIVE ANOTHER SHOW! REST! UNTIL LATER...



THE ROOM FALLS INTO DARKNESS AND HE GOES OUT! FOR A WHILE YOU JUST LIE THERE, SUCKING IN THE WARM AIR! THEN YOU TRY TO SIT UP! SOMETHING THING AROUND YOUR CHEST DING IN! YOU ARE STRAPPED DOWN...



YOU TRY TO MOVE YOUR ARMS! THE METAL BARS ACROSS YOUR WRISTS HOLD THEM FAST! YOU CALL OUT, SURPRISED AT THE HAWLED SCREECHINESS OF YOUR OWN VOICE! YOU LOOK DOWN TOWARDS YOUR FEET... AT THE HEAVY SCUFFED SHOES AND THE BARS ACROSS YOUR LEGS...



HOW DID YOU GET HERE? WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU? WHAT IS THIS FIRM TRYING TO DO TO YOU NOW? A COLD GRILL OF FEAR SHIVERS OVER YOU! YOU TUG AND STRAIN! THE STRAPS ACROSS YOUR CHEST PART LIKE PAPER AND YOU SIT UP, TEARING YOUR ARMS LOOSE... YOUR LEGS...



YOU CRAWL THROUGH THE OPEN WINDOW OF THE ROOM OUT INTO THE NIGHT! THE COOL NIGHT, FILLED WITH A THOUSAND VOICES... A MILLION FLOODING STARS! TO YOUR RIGHT, LIGHTS GLEAM BEHIND SILHOUETTED BUILDINGS...



PEOPLE... MANY PEOPLE... MOVE IN THE LIGHT... GAILY LAUGHING... TALKING! SOMEWHERE, A CALLIGRAPH PLAYS... ITS MUSIC DRIFTING INTO THE DARKNESS! A HARSH VOICE CALLS... LURING... PROMISING...



YOU ARE IN THE REAR ALLEY OF AN AMUSEMENT PARK! THE LIGHT AND THE LAUGHTER AND THE MUSIC AND THE VOICES SEEM TO DARE YOU... LIKE A MAGNET! YOU MOVE TOWARD THEM... SOME BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS... TOWARD THEM...



THEY'RE CLOSER NOW... THE LAUGHING PEOPLE! THEY MOVE PAST THE ALLEY... A SEA OF FACES... A SEA OF SMILES! AND NOW YOU'RE NEARLY THERE... NEARLY OUT OF THE ALLEY... NEARLY AMONG THEM...



THE WOMAN'S EYES BALDE IN HER BLANCHED FACE? SHE STARES AT YOU! HER HYSTERICAL SCREECH IS LIKE A DOOR SLAMMING OUT THE LAUGHTER... THE VOICES... THE MUSIC! SILENCE FALLS... **TERROR**... SILENCE!



SUDDENLY THE DOOR IS OPENED ONCE MORE! ONLY THIS TIME THERE IS NO LAUGHTER... NO MUSIC! SHOUTS OF DANGER... SCREAMS OF TERROR POUR IN AT YOU...



AGAIN, THAT CHILL OF FEAR KNIFE THROUGH YOU! YOU TURN... TURN FROM THE SHOUTS AND THE SCREAMS AND THE BLANCHED EYES AND BLANCHED FACES... AND YOU RUN... BACK OF THE ALLEY... BACK INTO THE BLACKNESS...



FOOTSTEPS CLATTER AFTER YOU, BUT THEY SOON FACE! THE AMUSEMENT PARK IS VERY FAR AWAY WHEN YOU FINALLY SLOW DOWN TO A WALK! YOU GASP FOR BREATH... AND YOUR HEART POUNDS IN YOUR CHEST LIKE A PISTON! YOU ARE ON A COUNTRY ROAD! THE RIBBON OF CONCRETE WINDS AWAY INTO THE DARKNESS! YOU MOVE ALONG IT...



BEHIND YOU, A GENTLE PURRING GROWS LOUDER AND LOUDER! A CLAMP! YOU TURN... FACING INTO THE DNGERING HEADLIGHT GLARE...



THE CAR PULLS UP BESIDE YOU! THE DRIVER CALLS TO YOU...

WANT A RIDE INTO TOWN, BUD?



YOU OPEN THE DOOR! FOR A MOMENT HE LOOKS AT YOU, HORRIFIED! THEN HE SCREAMS...



WHY DO THEY SCREAM WHEN THEY SEE YOU? THAT FRIGHTENED, TERRIFYING SCREAMING? YOU WANT TO STOP IT! YOU CLAP YOUR HAND OVER HIS MOUTH! BUT HIS EYES STILL SCREAM...



AND THEN HIS EYES GLAZE... AND ROLL... AND HE IS DEAD! HIS BODY GOES LIMP AND YOU LET IT SLIP AWAY FROM YOU LIKE A SOFT BAG! HE FALLS AGAINST THE STEERING WHEEL AND THE HORN BEGINS TO BLOW... A LONG MONOTONOUS MOAN...



YOU PULL HIM FROM THE CAR AND PUSH HIM TO THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...





THE CAR PURRS ALONG THE CONCRETE RIBBON SMOOTHLY! THE ROAD SLIPS FROM THE DARKNESS AHEAD INTO YOUR HEADLIGHT BEAM AND DOWN UNDER THE HUMMING WHEELS! SOON HOUSES BEGIN TO APPEAR! YOU ARE GOING INTO TOWN! AND THINGS SEEM FAMILIAR TO YOU...



AND THEN YOU SEE IT! THE SMALL WHITE COTTAGE! YOUR FOOT DEPRESSSES THE BRAKE PEDAL AUTOMATICALLY AS YOU SWING INTO THE DRIVEWAY! YOU'VE DONE IT A THOUSAND TIMES BEFORE! YOU KNOW IT...



YOU SLIP FROM THE CAR AND CROSS THE FRESHLY CUT LAWN! THE NAME ON THE SIGN STICKING FORWARD IN THE SHRUB BED STRIKES A FAMILIAR NOTE! THE NAME! 'STONE'! SUDDENLY YOU REMEMBER! ARTHUR STONE! THAT'S WHO YOU ARE! AND NANCY, YOUR WIFE... SHE'S WAITING FOR YOU...



YOU HAMMER ANXIOUSLY ON THE REAR GLASS FRONT DOOR! UPSTAIRS, A LIGHT GOES ON! FOOT-STEPS DESCEND INSIDE... COMING CLOSER... COMING DOWN THE STEPS! THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN...



NANCY! EVEN NANCY LOOKS AT YOU LIKE THAT! THOSE EYES... THOSE WIDE, FRIGHTENED, TERRIFIED EYES! AND NOW SHE'S SCREAMING... SCREAMING LIKE THE OTHERS...



AND NOW SHE'S RUNNING ON THE STAIRS, SCREAMING! AND YOU'RE RUNNING AFTER HER... CALLING HER NAME! ONLY IT ISN'T HER NAME THAT ESCAPES FROM YOUR THROAT! IT'S A CHOKING GABGLED, GUTTERAL SNAIL...



AND NOW SHE'S IN THE BEDROOM... AND YOU'RE MOVING TOWARD HER... PLEADING! BUT THERE'S NO RECOGNITION IN HER EYES... ONLY WILD Hysteria! AND SHE'S BACKING AWAY... BACKING TOWARD THE OPEN WINDOW... TOWARD...



SUDDENLY SHE'S GONE... BACKWARDS... OUT THE WINDOW! AND HER SCREAM IS CUT SHORT BY THE BULL THUD AS HER FLAILING BODY HITS THE BACKYARD PATIO BELOW! YOU RUSH TO THE WINDOW... STARRING DOWN AT HER... GORRING...



WHEN YOU GET TO HER/SHE'S DEAD? HER LIFELESS EYES STILL STARE AT YOU IN BLAZING FEAR...



YOU STUMBLE TO THE CAR AND SPEED BACK TO THE CARNIVAL! THE MAN WITH THE BEADY EYES AND THE THICK GLASSES? HE'S DONE SOMETHING TO YOU! NANCY IS DEAD... AND IT'S HIS FAULT...



AND THEN YOU'RE SLIPPING BACK UP THE AMUSEMENT PARK ALLEY... INTO THE OPEN WINDOW...



YOU? WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? THE PLACE IS DRAPE AND RUTH DOPE! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE ESCAPED!

YOU'RE MINE! I MADE YOU! I KNEW I COULD DO IT... AND I DID! I TOOK PARTS OF MONSTERS AND I PUT THEM TOGETHER! AND I TOOK A BRAIN... A BRAIN OF A MAN WHO DIED OUT THERE... IN MY GREAT HUSBAND... A MAN NAMED ARTHUR STONE! HE DIED OF A HEART ATTACK... AND I TOOK HIS BRAIN...



I MADE YOU LIVE! I ALWAYS BELIEVED IT WAS POSSIBLE! BUT THERE... IN MY CHAMBER OF HORRORS... THERE'S A TABLEAU OF FRANKENSTEIN... AND HIS MONSTER! YOU'RE MY MONSTER... MY FRANKENSTEIN! WHAT AN EXPERIMENT YOU'LL MAKE! I'LL BE FAMOUS! I'LL... I'LL... DON'T... LOOK AT ME... LIKE THAT! NO! EEEEE...



YOUR FINGERS CLOSE ABOUT HIS THROAT, CUTTING OFF HIS SCREAM! AND EVEN AS THE LIFE PAGES FROM HIS TITCHING BODY, YOU'RE STUFFING YOUR NEATLY STITCHED FINGERS... THE DEER WHISTS... THE SCARRED ARMS...



AND THEN YOU STUMBLE FROM THE ROOM... INTO THE WAX MUSEUM... LEAVING HIS LIFELESS BODY SPRAWLED AMID THE EQUIPMENT...



THEN YOU'RE STARING AT THE TABLEAU... BLOOD-CAROLING GROUPINGS OF HISTORIC HORROR SCENES...



...AND SLOWLY YOU SEE IT! THE MOST REVOLTING SCENE OF ALL! A DISGUSTING MONSTER... A CON-FLAGRATION OF STITCHED FLESH... A LEERING REPULSIVE THING... STARING AT YOU...



THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER. NO DOUBT! YOU SLAP YOUR HANDS TO YOUR GUTTERING MOUTH AS THE NAUSEA SWEEPS OVER YOU...



BUT THE MONSTER... THE MONSTER MOVED TOO!



BARBAR! YOU'RE LOOKING INTO A MIRROR? THAT'S WHY IN THERE! THAT REPULSIVE, STITCHED-FLESHED, HORROR MONSTER BEFORE YOU IS YOUR OWN REFLECTION...



YOU SMASH THE MIRROR INTO A THOUSAND GLIMMERING SHINING PIECES IN SHEER DISGUST AND HORROR...



THEN YOU'RE RUNNING...SCREAMING...OUT IN THE MIDWAY...



THE CLATTER OF FOOTSTEPS IS RIGHT BEHIND YOU, AS YOU TURN INTO A DOORWAY...



YOU'RE IN A MAZE... A MAZE OF SMOOTH-WALLED DARK PASSAGES... TRAPPED...



SUDDENLY, THE PASSAGES ARE FLOODED IN BRILLIANT LIGHT! FIGURES LEAP AT YOU FROM ALL SIDES... HORRIBLE, DISFIGURED, SPYGLASS-FLESHED FIGURES...



...AND NO MATTER WHICH WAY YOU TURN, YOUR HADDENING REVELATING REFLECTION GLARES AT YOU... SHOUTS AT YOU... BRUISES AT YOU IN UTTER REVEL-  
SION...



UNTIL... WHEN THEY FIND YOU... THE LIFE LEFT TO YOUR MON-  
STROUS BOIN-BRAIN BODY HAS FAGED... ESCAPED FROM EACH  
COUNTLESS LONG DEAD SECTION... SUBTRACTED FROM THE SUM-  
PRODUCT OF HORROR THAT ADDED UP TO YOU... DRIVEN FROM YOU  
BY THE MADNESS OF YOUR OWN IMAGE...



HEH, HEH? YEP, KIDDIES! AS THEY ALWAYS  
SAY... IF LOOKS COULD KILL... I'LL...  
IN THIS CASE... THEY DID! I HOPE YOU  
LOVED TAKING THE PART OF THE  
MONSTER IN THIS STORY! I ALSO  
HOPE... HEH, HEH... THAT IT DIDN'T  
AFFECT YOU! IF I WERE YOU, I'D  
JUST GO ON TO THE MUSEUM-KEEPER'S  
TALE! IT WOULDN'T...

ER... LOOK IN THE  
MIRROR RIGHT NOW!  
YOU MIGHT SEE  
SOMETHING YOU'LL  
WISH YOU HADN'T!  
HEY, WAIT! DEAR!  
BUT DON'T SAY I  
DIDN'T WARN YOU!  
'BYE, HEH... SEE  
YOU LATER!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, NOW THAT THE DRIFT-KEEPER HAS FINISHED DISHING OUT HIS OLD OIL, IT'S MY TURN TO ENTERTAIN YOU FRIENDS! WELCOME ONCE MORE TO THE HAULT OF HORROR! THIS IS YOUR VAULT-KEEPER, WITH ANOTHER HORROR TALE FROM MY COLLECTION! AND THIS ONE IS ABOUT OIL...BLACK, GOODY, MONEY OIL! I CALL THIS BLOOD-CURLING HAIR-RAISER

## OIL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL!



THE FLASHY CONVERTIBLE CAME TO A STOP AT A POINT ON THE HIGHWAY OVERLOOKING THE SPARKLING MIDWESTERN TOWN! THE TWO MEN IN THE CAR LOOKED DOWN AT THE BOOFTOPS AND SMILED.

WELL, WELL, THERE SHE IS... WAITING FOR US... LIKE A SITTING DUCK... WAITING TO BE PLOCKED.

THERE'S THE TOWN... DOWN THERE IN THE CENTER OF TOWN... AND THERE'S THE CEMETERY...



THE DRIVER TURNED TO THE ONE WITH THE CIGARETTE BETWEEN HIS LIPS...

LOOK, PHIL! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO TALK WITH THAT SUTTY GARDLING FROM YOUR MOUTH? IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.

HUNT ON! I'M SORRY, SAM! I FORGOT.



WELL, DON'T FORGET! AFTER ALL! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE AN HONEST BUSINESSMAN! YOU LOOK LIKE A SHAMMY WHEN YOU DO THAT!

OHAY! OHAY! DON'T GET EXCITED, SAM! I'LL BE CAMP FULL!



THE CAR CONTINUED ON DOWN THE HIGHWAY. FINALLY, IT PULLED UP BEFORE THE ONE HOTEL IN TOWN.

ALL RIGHT! ON YOUR TOWN! HERE WE GO! I'LL START GETTING THE SHIPS OUT! YOU CHECK IN!

RIGHT, SAM!



THE ONE NAMED SAM STARTED TO UNLOAD THE LUGGAGE FROM THE FLASHY CONVERTIBLE WHILE THE OTHER ONE... PHIL... ENTERED THE HOTEL AND CROSSED THE LOBBY TO THE DESK...

HONORABLE STRANGER! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I'D LIKE TWO ROOMS... ONE FOR MYSELF AND ONE FOR MY FIELD MAN!



FIELD MAN? WHAT'S THAT?

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. MY NAME IS PHILIP GARDNER! OH, I'M A BUSINESSMAN! I LOCATE OIL DEPOSITS FOR BIG OIL COMPANIES! MY FIELD MAN, MR. JIMMISON, HANDLES THE GENERAL SUPERVISION OF PROSPECTIVE SITES! WE'RE JUST PASSING THROUGH!



OH, BUT WHEN HERE! THINK OF LOOKING AROUND THESE PARTS!

THANK YOU! ER... NO! WE'RE ON OUR WAY NORTH.

WHERE SHALL I PUT THE LUGGAGE, MR. GARDNER?



ROOMS 201 AND 202, UP THEM STAIRS AND TURN RIGHT!

YOU HEARD THE GENTLEMAN, MR. JIMMISON?

YES, SIR!



THE MAN BEHIND THE DESK  
SWITCHED AS SAM CARRIED THE  
LUGGAGE UP THE STAIRS AND PAUL  
FOLLOWED...



UPSTAIRS...OUT OF EARSNOT...  
SAM WHISPERED ANGERLY TO PAUL...



LATER... AS NIGHT CAME ON... IN THE  
HOTEL LOBBY...



AND THAT'S ALL YOU DO IN  
LOCATE OIL DEPOSITS,  
AND WHEN THE BIG OIL  
COMPANIES BUY...COLLECT  
YOUR COMMISSION FROM  
THE OWNER OF THE  
LAND?



A LOT BETTER OFF! YOU'RE  
RIGHT! BUT DRILLING  
EQUIPMENT COSTS A  
GREAT DEAL, MR. PAUL!  
MORE THAN I'VE GOTTA  
HAVE TO BORROW...



MR. GARRISON! I'VE GOT TO  
SPEAK TO YOU...  
PRIVATELY!



OIL, MR. GARRISON!  
I'M SURE OF IT!



SAN FOLLOWED PHIL UP THE STAIRS, LEAVING THEM THE HOTEL LOBBY BUZZED WITH EXCITEMENT...



THEY FOUND OIL...  
 RIGHT HERE IN TOWN...  
 WHERE? SEARCH ME...  
 ANYBODY SEE WHERE THAT SIMPSON FELLER CAME FROM?

UPSTAIRS IN THE ROOM. THE TWO MEN SMILED. PHIL SHREW THE SHADE ASIDE AND PEERED OUT...



THERE'S A CROWD BATHING IN, SAM? MEN, MEN! DID YOU TAKE CARE OF IT?  
 ROBBON WAS AROUND? I TOOK CARE OF IT! SHE'LL DOZE FOR A WEEK! NOW GO AHEAD DOWN AND START THE PITCH... BUT DOWNE THE CIGARETTE FIRST!

FIVE MINUTES LATER, PHIL CAME DOWNSTAIRS. THE LOBBY OF THE HOTEL WAS JAMMED WITH TOWN-FOLK...



IT'D LIKE TO SEE THE MAYOR!  
 I... I'M THE MAYOR! JORDON'S MY NAME!

MAYOR JORDON'S HAVE BEEN ADVISED BY MY FIELD MAN THAT THERE IS OIL ON THE TOWN'S PROPERTY... UNDER THE CITY PARK!



THE PARK?

HEY! THE TOWN'S OIL UNDER THE PARK!  
 SHALL WE GO ON OVER, MAYOR JORDON?  
 LET'S GO, MR. JORDON!



THE CROWD STOOD AROUND THE BLACK SLICK THAT SEEPED FROM THE GROUND IN THE PARK...



THERE ARE TWO THINGS YOU CAN DO, MAYOR JORDON! YOU CAN TURN THE LAND OVER TO A PRIVATE OIL COMPANY, OR DRILL FOR IT YOURSELVES...  
 BUT WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT DRILLING FOR OIL!

WELL... I COULD HANDLE SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS...  
 IT FOR YOU... BUT IT WOULD COST A GREAT DEAL! ABOUT SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS...  
 BUT WE COULDN'T AFFORD.



SAY, MAYOR! WHY COULDN'T YOU LET US FOLKS IN TOWN PUT UP THE MONEY FROM A CORPORATION AND ISSUE STOCK...



MARSH JORDON TURNED TO THE SPEND.

WHAT DO YOU SAY, FOLKS? DO WE TURN THE LAND OVER TO A PRIVATE COMPANY, OR RAISE THE MONEY AND DRILL FOR THE OIL OURSELVES?

GASP - BELIEVE!

FEAR! LET'S KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY!



LATER, IN THE HOTEL ROOM...

THEY FELL FOR IT. SAME! THEY'RE GOING TO FORM A CORPORATION AND ISSUE STOCK! I'VE BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF THE DRILLING!

GOOD! NOW AS SOON AS THEY TURN THE MONEY OVER TO US, WE'LL PULL THE ROUTINE...



A CORPORATION WAS FORMED! STOCK WAS ISSUED! SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM THE TOWNFOLK POURED IN.

FINALLY...

WELL, MR. SANDSON! THE STOCK ISSUE HAS BEEN SOLD... EVERY LAST SHARE! HERE'S A CHECK, FOR SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS!

GOOD! NOW WE CAN START THE DRILLING...



HERE'S A THOUSAND DOLLARS, MR. JORDON! THAT'S ALL WE COULD SCRAPE UP! THANKS, MR. JORDON! HERE'S YOUR TEN SHARES!



THEN...

HERE'S THE CHECK, SAM! I JUST CASHED THE CHECK! WHY DON'T WE STOP FOR A MOMENT AND VISIT THE CEMETERY ROUTINE...

NO! WE'LL WANT TO WORK THIS DEAL, ARSON! YOU'VE GOT TO BE KEPT IN THE CLEAR! THE CEMETERY ROUTINE STAYS!



AND JUST TO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T FORGET TO COME AND BID ME UP, I'LL HAVE THE BOSS! NOW GIVE ME ONE OF THOSE PILLS, AND PHONE THE BOSS! YOU KNOW WHAT TO SAY!

HERE Y'ARE...



I'LL DON'T FORGET! BID ME UP WITHIN SIX HOURS AFTER THEY BID ME! WE'LL PICK UP THE BOSS ON THE WAY OUT OF TOWN! AND FOR CRIME! OUT LOUD, BITE THAT CIGARETTE...

RIGHT! OH...I FORGET! I'LL LONG, SAM!



MAYOR JORDON HUNG UP TO FIND  
BARBON'S HOTEL ROOM IN ANSWER  
TO HIS FRANTIC PHONE CALL.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN,  
THE OIL DEPOSITS  
A FRAUD?

IT'S TRUE!  
WHEN I FOUND  
SIMPSON...  
MY FIELD MAN,  
JONES, AND THE  
DRILLING MONEY  
WENT TOO, I  
CHECKED!



HE POURED OIL  
INTO THAT SANDY  
SPOT IN THE PARK!  
THERE'S AN OIL  
UNDER THERE!  
WE'VE BEEN  
TAKEN/COINED!

WE'LL GET  
HIM! HE  
WON'T GET  
FAR!



JUST OUTSIDE OF TOWN, THEY  
FOUND THE FLAMING CONVERTIBLE.

HE'S  
DEAD!

HEART  
ATTACK,  
PROBABLY.

DID  
YOU  
FIND  
THE  
MONEY/LAR?

MOVIE  
NOT  
A  
DOO-LAR!



PHIL BARBON WAS QUESTIONED CAREFULLY...

I... I TRUSTED HIM! HE'D BEEN WITH  
ME ALMOST A YEAR! I CAN'T BELIEVE  
IT! FIRST, LIEING ABOUT THE OIL...  
THEN STEALING THE MONEY... AND  
NOW THIS! DEAD! I'M... I'M SO  
SORRY FOR ALL THE POLICE THAT  
TRUSTED ME!

IT WASN'T YOUR  
FAULT! DO YOU  
HAVE ANY IDEA  
WHAT HE MIGHT  
HAVE DONE WITH  
THE MONEY, MR.  
BARBON?



DIDN'T HE  
HAVE IT  
WITH  
HIM?

NO? WE SEARCHED CAREFULLY HIS  
CLOTHES!... THE CAR! HE PROBABLY  
HID IT SOMEWHERE, PLANNING TO  
COME BACK AND GET IT! NOW,  
IT'S LOST... FOR GOOD!



I'D LIKE TO CLAIM HIS  
BODY... YOU KNOW... GIVE  
HIM A DECENT BURIAL!

OF COURSE, MR. BARBON!  
I'LL GIVE YOU A  
RELEASE!



AND SO, THAT AFTERNOON, SAN SIMPSON WAS BURIED!  
NATURALLY, PHIL HAD MADE SURE THAT SAN'S BODY  
WAS NOT IDENTIFIED...



AND WHEN THE EFFECTS OF THE FILL GEL HAD TAKEN WORK OFF, HE WROTE UP SIX FEET UNDER THE EARTH...

THE WARM THICK LIQUID CONTINUED TO SEEP INTO THE COFFIN AS THE HOURS DRAINED BY...

THE OODS RUSSELD WIGHER AND WIGHER IN THE COFFIN! IT ROSE ABOVE SAM'S EARS...

WHAT'S THAT? SOMETHING STUCK...  
DROPPING INTO THE COFFIN?  
BROODY WATER? I SMELL FUNNY...



PHIL WILL BE HERE SOON! HE'LL SMELL ME UP! THEN! THAT SMELL!



PHIL! FOR HERE'S DARK! NOBODY... BEFORE I DROWN! WHAT IS THAT OODS?



SAM WAS PRESSING HIS FACE AGAINST THE SATIN LID OF THE COFFIN, SUGGESTING AT THE LAST TRACES OF AIR WITH THE DRIVING SOUNDED FROM ABOVE...

IT'S PHIL! THANK THE LORD! HURRY, PHIL! WHY WILL I BE GLAD TO USE YOUR STUPID FACE WITH THAT DAMNED CIGARETTE... AND... AND... NOW I KNOW WHAT THAT STUFF SMELLS LIKE! OY! LORD!



AND AS PHIL LIFTED THE LID OF THE COFFIN, SAM SCREAMED AT HIM, HIS BLACK SHINING FACE RISING FROM THE SURFACE OF THE OODS-FILLED COFFIN...

IT'S OIL... PHIL!

HURT



THE CIGARETTE DANGLE FROM PHIL'S MOUTH DROPPED INTO THE THICK BLACK OIL AS HIS JAW FELL OPEN IN ASTONISHMENT! SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A BLINDING WHITE FLASH...



HEH, HEH? PHIL FORGOT AGAIN! ONLY THIS TIME, SAM BLEW UP! OF COURSE PHIL WENT TO PIECES OVER HIS BAD HABIT, TOO! BUT THE LITTLE TOWN GOT ITS OIL BOOM AFTER ALL! THE SIXTY BRAND SAM HAD HIDDEN WAS NEVER FOUND!

THEY TORE THE FLASHY CONVERTIBLE TO BITS LOOKING FOR IT! WARRA OUT A CAR ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN... A BIF AT A TIME! WE, NOW! SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, THE VAULT OF HORROR!



# LOVE STORY



I met Negra in my last year at medical school. She had come to the university that year to study medicine as an exchange student from Mecklenburg, Germany.

Dr. Justin McGill was presenting an exhibit in his field of hematology, pertaining to any of the diseases of the blood, and as I was quite interested in this study, I spent much of my free time assisting him in preparing slides of blood smears.

I had just come from the university hospital with a fresh specimen of blood taken from a patient who was a "bleeder", one in whom the constituents of fibrin do not exist in proper proportion or proper quantity, thus preventing a clot to form when bleeding takes place. Many afflicted with this blood deficiency have bled to death from a simple scratch!

Dr. McGill was conducting his hemocytology class when I entered his laboratory. I took a microscope from a wall cabinet and set it up on a table at the back of the room. I placed a few drops of the "bleeder's" non-coagulated blood on a slide and proceeded to study it under high-power.

I raised my head slowly from the eyepiece when a soft voice said in careful, precise English, "May I look at your slide?" It was a girl withraven-black hair and inquisitive dark eyes. Her face was as pale as her neatly starched laboratory frock.

She looked into my microscope. In a few seconds she said, "Hemophilic! Delayed clotting of the blood and consequent difficulty in checking hemorrhages!"

"Right!", I added, surprised at her rapid cell-detection. "It's a congenital condition inherited by males through the mother as a sex-linked character."

"I feel so sorry for the people who are afflicted with it! They can't live a normal life... they have to be so careful! There are so many strange conditions of the blood which are passed on from generation to generation", she said feebly. I thought she was just another medical student going through the usual stages of test-book hypochondria.

I soon learned that Negra was Dr. McGill's best student. She seemed obsessed with a morbid curiosity about blood. Whenever I worked in the lab, or classified types in the plasma depository, she would come to talk to me.

One day she came into the blood bank, her face more blanched than usual. I told her that she was studying too hard and required more rest. I left her in charge of the bank while I went to the medical building to see a dying friend who was waiting away from so visible disease. Incidentally, the poor fellow was a classmate and an acquaintance of Negra's!

When I came back to relieve Negra, there was a red healthy glow to her face!

A few days later, my month-old friend expired. An autopsy showed a definite pernicious anemia. Half of the blood-content of his body had dried up in the course of a few weeks. Only a month before, he had undergone a complete physical and was found well and robust! As an added shock, I found a shortage of some forty-two pints in the blood bank!!

That night I took Negra to town to see a movie. We were returning about midnight when my car was stalled by a sudden rain-storm... wet wires! Negra and I sat in the front seat, watching the rain pounding on the hood and windshield. Soon I began to doze off... but I didn't sleep very long! I was jolted upright by long, deep, gurgling, heaving, inhaling sounds!

I turned towards Negra. Her lips were bloody and her mouth was stretched over the alabaster-white surface of her writhing right forearm! She was swallowing her own blood as fast as she could draw it into her spastically contracting cheeks. But she could never satiate her lustful thirst for death grew stronger, she also grew weaker! As she gained blood, she also lost blood!

Now all was clear to me! Negra had inherited Vampirism as an old family trait. I had read of the ancient blood-suckers of Mecklenburg! When the rain stopped, I set my car... and Negra... ablaze. She would find sweet innocent rest at last!

But why hadn't she inflicted her blood-sucking upon me? Could it be that Negra, the reluctant vampire, was in love with me??

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

I CALL THIS NAUSEATING NURSERY NOVELETTE...

## ATTACKS OF HORROR!



ONCE UPON A TIME...LONG, LONG AGO...THERE WAS A TINY SEASIDE KINGDOM GOVERNED BY A FAT KING WHO WAS MAD ABOUT MONEY...

ONE THOUSAND...TWO THOUSAND...THREE THOUSAND...FOUR THOUSAND...FIVE...

**KING MONEYMAD!**  
**KING MONEYMAD!**

CAN'T YOU SEE I'M COUNTING MY MONEY, ROYAL ADVISOR! I TOLD YOU NEVER TO INTERRUPT ME WHEN I'M COUNTING MY MONEY! NOW I'LL HAVE TO BEGIN ALL OVER AGAIN! ONE THOUSAND...TWO...

BUT KING MONEYMAD! I'VE GOT IT! I'VE GOT IT! A WAY FOR YOU TO GET MORE MONEY!



THREE THOUSAND... FOUR... WHAT? YOU'VE THOUGHT OF A WAY FOR ME TO GET MORE MONEY. ROYAL ADVISOR? NOW?

TAXES, KING MONEYBAG?

TAXES, ROYAL ADVISOR? WHAT ARE TAXES?

YOU CHARGE PEOPLE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MONEY FOR FEAR FOR SOMETHING THAT'S CALLED A TAX!

WELL, WHAT DO YOU TAX PEOPLE FOR. ROYAL ADVISOR?

ANYTHING? YOU JUST FEAR OF A THING AND TAX THEM FOR IT!



THAT'S ALL THERE IS FOR IT, EH. ROYAL ADVISOR JUST FEAR OF SOMETHING AND TAX THEM FOR IT. SHALL I RIGHT ISSUE A DECREE, ROYAL ADVISOR...

A TAX DECREE, EH, KING MONEYBAG?

A TAX DECREE? YES! TO ALL THE TITLED PEOPLE IN MY KINGDOM... COUNTS, DUKES, LORDS, EARLS... FOR USING THEIR TITLES, I TAX THEM 10,000 PIECES OF GOLD A YEAR!

SORT OF A 'DOR TAX', EH, KING MONEYBAG? GOOD! I WILL ISSUE THE DECREE IMMEDIATELY!



AND SO, FAT KING MONEYBAG LEARNED ABOUT TAXES! HIS 'DOR TAX' WAS A COMPLETE SUCCESS! MONEY POURED INTO THE ROYAL TREASURY FROM ARMY TITLE-HOLDERS ALL OVER THE KINGDOM...

SEVEN THOUSAND... EIGHT THOUSAND... NINE THOUSAND... TEN...

KING MONEYBAG? KING MONEYBAG?

ROYAL ADVISOR? HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO INTERRUPT ME WHEN I'M COUNTING MY MONEY? NOW WHERE WAS I?

KING MONEYBAG? ALL TITLEHOLDERS HAVE PAID THEIR 'DOR TAX'! THERE WON'T BE ANY MORE MONEY COMING IN! THINK OF SOMETHING...



TAKE A DECREE, ROYAL ADVISOR! TO ALL OWNERS OF BOATS? A TAX OF THREE PIECES OF GOLD PER SQUARE YARD OF CANVAS IS HEREBY LEVIED!

'SAILS TAX,' OH, KING? GOOD! I'LL ISSUE THE DECREE, IMMEDIATELY!



AND SO THE 'SAILS TAX' WAS LEVIED! RATE FISHERMEN PROTESTED... BUT TO NO AVEIL...

BUT I HAVE SIXTY SQUARE YARDS OF SAILS! MY FAMILY WILL STARVE!

100 PIECES OF GOLD... OF ELSE...



... AND MONEY FLOWED INTO THE ROYAL TREASURY.

TWELVE THOUSAND... KING MONEYWAD!  
THIRTEEN THOUSAND... KING MONEYWAD!  
FOURTEEN... KING MONEYWAD!



ROYAL ADVISOR! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU... OH... WHAT'S THE GOSE? WHAT IS IT NOW?



IT'S THE 'SAILS TAX,' KING MONEYWAD! ALL SAILS HAVE BEEN TAKEN! IF NO MORE MONEY WILL BE COMING IN! NOW WHAT?

ARE THOSE EXPOSED STILL WANDERING AROUND THE KINGDOM, ROYAL ADVISOR? THE ONES THAT FELL FORTUNES...

YES, KING MONEYWAD!



TAKE A DECREE, ROYAL ADVISOR! BECAUSE THERE ARE TOO MANY FORTUNE TELLERS IN THE KINGDOM, EACH ONE IS TAXED 100 PIECES OF GOLD...



'EXCESS PROPHETS TAX,' OH, KING? GOOD! I'LL ISSUE THE DECREE...

AND SO THE 'EXCESS PROPHETS TAX' WAS LEVIED! ANGRY EYES? FORTUNE TELLERS PROTESTED... BUT TO NO AVEIL...

BUT I WAS JUST ON MY WAY OUT OF THE KINGDOM!

100 PIECES OF GOLD, OR YOU'LL BE STAYING HERE A LONG, LONG TIME IN A DOWNGRADE!



KING MONEYMAD'S MADNESS FOR MONEY GREW AND GREW AS MORE AND MORE POURED INTO HIS TREASURY! THE MORE HE GOT, THE MORE HE WANTED...

TAKE A DECREE, ROYAL ADVISOR! ANYONE WHO OWNS A FISHING BOAT IS TAXED 90 PIECES OF GOLD.

'POLE TAX' EN, MMS...

NOW, KING MONEYMAD'S KINGDOM WAS A FISHING KINGDOM! SINCE IT WAS LOCATED BY THE SEA, MANY PEOPLE HAD FISHING BOATS! SO, WHEN THE 'POLE TAX' WAS LEVIED...

KING MONEYMAD WAS DONE FOR ENOUGH!

NINETY PIECES OF GOLD FOR A FISHING POLE. HE'S TAKING US INTO POVERTY...



BUT THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM WHO OWNED FISHING BOATS PAID THEIR 'POLE TAX' ANYWAY...

THIRTY-FIVE THOUSAND... THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND... THIRTY-SEVEN...

KING MONEYMAD! KING MONEYMAD!



NOW WHAT?

THE 'POLE TAX' HAS BEEN COMPLETELY COLLECTED! BUT ANY IDEAS?



TAKE A DECREE! TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE FISHES IN THEIR HOMES...

'CARPET TAX' EN!



THE PEOPLE OF KING MONEYMAD'S KINGDOM WERE FURIOUS...

90 PIECES OF GOLD BECAUSE I HAVE THAT STRAW MAT ON MY FLOOR...

A CARPET IS A CARPET! PAY UP OR ELSE...



PRACTICALLY EVERYONE HAD AT LEAST A MAT ON THEIR FLOOR! THOSE WHO COULDN'T PAY WERE DRAGGED OFF TO PRISON...

DADDY! DADDY!

NO! NO! DON'T TAKE MY HUSBAND AWAY!

YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY THE 'CARPET TAX'! WHEN IT'S PAID, HE'LL BE RELEASED!





THE MONEY CONTINUED TO POUR  
INTO KING MONEYMAD'S TREASURY.  
SIXTY-EIGHT  
THOUSAND...  
SIXTY-NINE...

KING  
MONEYMAD!

ALL RIGHT,  
ROYAL ADVISOR!  
WHAT'S THE  
BAD NEWS?

THE 'CARPET  
TAX'! IT'S ALL  
PAID OFF!

THEN TAKE THIS DECREE,  
ROYAL ADVISOR! A TAX  
OF 20 PIECES OF GOLD  
EACH IS BEING LEVIED  
ON EVERY THING IN  
THE LAND...

'THUMB  
TAX'!

THIS TAX... THE 'THUMB TAX'... WAS THE LAST STRAW.  
THE PEOPLE HAD BEEN TAXED UNTIL THEY COULD  
PAY NO MORE...

THEY HAVE NO MORE  
MONEY, KING MONEYMAD!  
THEY CANNOT PAY THE  
'THUMB TAX'!

IF THEY CAN'T PAY THE  
'THUMB TAX'... THEN THEY  
CAN'T HAVE THEIR  
THUMBS! TAKE A  
DECREE!

WHAT DOES  
IT SAY?

IT SAYS THAT THE 'THUMB TAX'  
MUST BE PAID, OR THE THUMBS  
WILL BE REMOVED!

GASP!

THOSE WHO COULD NOT PAY WERE LINED UP OUTSIDE  
THE PALACE! THE LINE WAS VERY LONG! KING MONEY-  
MAD SAT IN THE PALACE COURTYARD NEXT TO THE AD-  
VISOR...

ALL RIGHT! BRING THEM IN...  
ONE AT A TIME...

THE KING SAYS  
BRING THEM IN...  
ONE AT A TIME...

THE FIRST MAN WAS CRACKED TO THE CHOPPING  
BLOCK...

FOR NOT PAYING YOUR  
'THUMB TAX', YOU MUST  
LOSE YOUR THUMBS...


NO! MERCY!  
MERCY!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLO! YEP, KIDNOS, IT'S YOUR HOSTESS IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR, THE OLD WITON, STIRRING HER CAULDRON AGAIN, READY TO SERVE YOU ANOTHER HORROR HELPING. THE RECKING RECIPE I'VE COOKED UP THIS TIME WAS FIRST DISHED OUT BY A VERY DEAR FRIEND OF MINE, AMERICA'S FOREMOST FANTASY WRITER, **RAY BRADBURY**! SO, TUCK YOUR DRUGS UNDER YOUR CHINS, AND I'LL FEED YOU MY ADAPTATION OF MR. BRADBURY'S...

**THERE WAS AN  
OLD WOMAN!**



THE TALL DARK YOUNG MAN STOOD QUIETLY, NOT MOVING. AGENT TILDY SHOOK HER HEAD, FUSING WITH HER KNITTING...

NOT THERE'S NO USE ARGUING. I GOT MY MIND FIXED. YOU RUN ALONG WITH YOUR SILLY BROKEN BASKET, LANDLAD. WHERE'D YOU EVER GET NOTIONS LIKE THAT? YOU JUST GET OUT OF HERE AND DON'T BOTHER ME.

THE TALL DARK MAN SAT DOWN. HE JUST SAT THERE, STAREING. THE BONG-PONG-PLAIN, FLOWERED CLOCK ON THE MANTLEPIECED THREE, OUT IN THE HALL, OSCILLATED AROUND THE WICKER BASKET. FOUR MEN WAITED, QUIETLY, HARDLY MOVING, AS IF THEY WERE THERE.

NOW ABOUT THAT WICKER BASKET. IT'S NOT *JUST* FEET LONG, AND BY THE LOOK OF IT, IT *AIN'T* LAUNDRY. AND THOSE FOUR MEN YOU WALKED IN WITH, YOU DON'T NEED THEM TO CARRY THE BASKET. WHY, IT'S LIGHT AS *THRILLER* FISH.

THE DARK YOUNG MAN WATCHED AUNT TILTY SOMETHING IN HIS FACE SUGGESTED THAT THE BASKET WOULDN'T BE SO LIGHT AFTER A WHILE. THERE'D BE SOMETHING IN IT.

NOW WHERE'VE I SEEN A WICKER LIKE THAT BEFORE? SEEMS TO ME... OH! NOW I REMEMBER! IT WAS WHEN MRS. DRYDEN PASSED AWAY NEXT DOOR.



AUNT TILTY SETHER KNITTING DOWN STEADILY.

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE HERE FOR, I *THOUGHT* YOU WERE WORKIN' TO *SELL* ME SOMETHING. WELL YOU JUST BET TELL *EARLY* COMES HOME, SHE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU. WE'LL SEND YOU OUT OF THE HOUSE SO *QUICK* I'LL...



THE DARK MAN LOOKED AT AUNT TILTY AS IF SHE WERE TIED.

NOT I'M NOT I'M NOT TIED. GREAT BONS O' SORROW ON THE SILVERED FIRE. I GOT A HUNDRED COMFORTERS, TWO HUNDRED SWEATERS, AND SIX HUNDRED POE-HOLDERS IN THESE FINGERS. NO MATTER HOW BRINKT THEY ARE, YOU RUN AND COME *BACK* WHEN THEY'RE *DONE*... AND MAYBE I'LL TALK TO YOU.



THERE WAS A NOISE. THE MANTEL CLOCK BOUNDED THREE. STRANGER! IT SEEMED TO HER THAT IT HAD CHIMED THREE ONCE BEFORE.



ARE YOU JUST GOIN' TO *SIT* THEM, YOUNG MAN?

He was...

THEN, YOU DON'T NEED IF I TAKE A NAP. JUST A CAT-NAP. NOW YOU DON'T GET UP OFF THAT CHAIR. YOU SET THERE. YOU SET THERE AND DON'T COME CREEP'N' AROUND ME. JUST GOIN' TO CLOSE MY EYES FOR A WHOLE SPELL....



SO FEATHERY. NO DROWSE. NO DEEP, UNDER WATERS, ALMOST. OH, SO NICE. WHO'S THAT MOVIN' AROUND IN THE DARK WITH MY EYES CLOSED? WHO'S THAT *KISSIN'* MY CHEEK? FORGIE ME, CHILLY NO. GUESS IT WAS MY THOUGHTS. ONLY DREAMIN', DRIFTIN' OFFTIN OFF... OH.



THE CLOCK CHIMED THREE AGAIN. AUNT TILDT SAT UP. THE YOUNG MAN IN THE DARK SUIT STOOD NEAR THE DOOR. "YOU LEAVIN' SO SOON, YOUNG MARY?"

"GOOD THING! EMILY'S COMIN' HOME AND SHE'D FIX YOU. HAD TO GIVE UP, DIDN'T YOU COULDN'T CONVINCE ME, COULD YOU? WELL, YOUNG MAN, YOU NEEDN'T BOTHER COMIN' BACK TO TRY AGAIN!"



THE DARK YOUNG MAN BOWED WITH SLIGHT GRINITY. HE HAD NO INTENTION OF COMING BACK... EVER.

FINE. WHY YOU COULDN'T GET ME OUT OF THIS HOUSE. HOSIERS? WHY, I'M GOING TO KILT IN THIS WINDOW THE NEXT THOUSAND YEARS. THEY'LL HAVE TO CHURN THE BOARDS AROUND ME TO... TO... BUT LOOKIN' LIKE THE CAT THAT ATE THE BIRD? BUT OUT AND TOTE THAT POOL WICKER BOX WITH YOU!"



THE FOUR MEN TREADED HEAVILY OUT THE FRONT DOOR. TILDT STUDIED THE WAY THEY HANDED THE WICKER. IF WASN'T HEAVY, YET THEY STAMMERED WITH ITS WEIGHT. SHE BLANCED ABOUT CONCERNEDLY...

"HERE, NOW? DID YOU STEAL SOME OF MY ANTIQUES? MY BOOKS? NO. THE CLOCKS? NO. WHAT YOU GOT IN THAT WICKER?"



THE DARK MAN OFFERED THE LID OF THE WICKER TO AUNT TILDT. IN PANTHOMHE HE WONDERED IF SHE'D LIKE TO OPEN IT AND TAKE INSIDE...

"SUREST? BET? SHAM, NO. GET OUT! GET OUT! HERE! HOSIERS!"



THE DOOR SLAMMED. THAT WAS BETTER DARNED POOL MEN WITH THEIR MADDOTTY IDEAS...

"AN, HERE COMES EMILY. ABOUT FIVE. BUT, LARD SHE LOOKS PALE AND FOMMY TODAY. WALKIN' SO SLOW..."



EMILY SHUFFLED INTO THE HALLOR, HEAD DOWN. "EMILY, I BEEN WAITIN' FOR YOU. THERE WAS THE DARNDDEST POOL MEN JUST HERE WITH A WICKER. GLAD YOU'RE HOME!" EMILY...



"EMILY! STOP SCREAMING!"



A WHITE-SMOKED MAN, EVIDENTLY A MORTICIAN, GLANCED UP FROM THE RECENTLY ARRIVED WOMAN AS AUNT TILLY STORMED INTO THE MORTUARY.

"MADAME! THIS IS NO FIT PLACE FOR A GENTLE WOMAN!"

"WELL, GLAD YOU FEEL THAT WAY. THEN'S MY SENTIMENTS, EXACTLY. I DON'T WANT *ME* HERE! I WANT *ME HOME!*" I GOT EMILY TO FEEL! SWEATERS TO *KNIT!* GLOVES TO *WIND!*...

THE MORTICIAN LOOKED AT HER. THEN AT THE WICKER. HE MOUTHED HIS WORDS WITH APPARENT RELIGION, AND A WINKING OF HIS EYES, TUBES, JARS AND INSTRUMENTS...

"MADAME! I HAVE *WORK* TO DO! A *BODY* HAS ARRIVED!"

"YOU LAY SO MUCH AS A *DEFENSE* ON THAT BODY AND I'LL THROAT YOU!"

THE MORTICIAN OPENED THE WICKER LID GRABBERLY THEN, IN A MOMENTARY SERIES OF SOMETHINGS, HE REALIZED THAT THE BODY *WAS*. IT SEEMED. COULD IT BE...

"OH...THIS LADY, HERE? SHE IS...A RELATIVE?"

"WON'D YOU *FOOL* ME? DO YOU HEART ME? I WANT MY BODY BACK!"

THE MORTICIAN CONSIDERED THE IDEA. HE SHOOK HIS HEAD.

"NO THINGS LIKE THIS DON'T *SUPPLY* SECRET! SHOW HER OUT! GET HELP FROM THE *OTHERS!* I CAN'T WORK WITH A *GRAND* PRESENT!"

THE FOUR MEN ASSEMBLED AND CONVERSED. AUNT TILLY WAS A LONE FORTRESS, ARMS CROSSED IN DEFIANCE.

"DON'T *BUDGE* THEN!"

SHE REPEATED THIS AS SHE WAS EVICTED IN CON-CESSIVE MOVES, LIKE A PAWN ON A CHESSBOARD, FROM THE LABORATORY. FINALLY, SHE SAT DOWN ON A CHAIR IN THE VESTIBULE OF THE FUNERAL PARLOR. THERE WERE FEW GOING BACK INTO SILENT SILENCE, AND A FLOWER SWEET...

"YOU CAN'T SIT *THERE*, MA'AM! THAT'S WHERE THE *BODY* RESTS FOR THE *SERVICES* THOROUGH!"

"I'M *SITTING* HERE! TELL I GET WHAT I WANT!"

MR. GARRINGTON, MORTUARY PRESIDENT, HEARD THE DISRUPTION AND CAME TRODDING DOWN THE AISLE TO INVESTIGATE.

"HERE, HERE! MORE RESPECT FOR MADAME. MAY I HELP YOU?"

"GO IN THAT BACK ROOM THERE AND TELL THAT *EAGER* INVESTIGATOR TO SHUT *FOOLING* WITH MY BODY!"

MR. CARRINGTON HURRIED OFF AFTER FIFTEEN MINUTES OF COMPARING NOTES WITH THE MORTICIAN BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. HE RETURNED, THREE SHADES WHITER.

OH... THAT IS... **LOOK HERE, MOST IRREGULAR! MOST IRREGULAR! MOST IRREGULAR!** YOU FELL THAT...



BUT HE'S **ALREADY** PUMPING THE **BLOOD** FROM THE **BODY!**



WHAT?

YES, YES. SO, YOU JUST GO AWAY, NOW. THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE. THE **BLOOD'S** RUNNING AND SOON THE **BODY'LL** BE ALL FILLED WITH **NICE FRESH FORMALDEHYDE**, AND **BESIDES...HE'S** ALSO PERFORMING A **SHIRT AUTOPSY!**



CUT-  
TAN!  
WE  
IS  
HE?

IF-YET TO DETERMINE CAUSES OF DEATH, Y'KNOW, HE



WASH STRAIGHT IN AND FEEL THAT CUM-UP TO PUMP ALL THAT FINE NEW ENGLAND BLOOD RIGHT BACK INTO THAT FINE-SKINNED BODY! AND IF HE'S TAKEN ANYTHING OUT OF HIM TO ATTACH IT BACK IN SO IT'LL FUNCTION PROPER! YOU HEAR?



THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO, MORTUARY!



ALL RIGHT! I'M GETTIN' HERE. THE NEXT TWO HUNDRED YEARS! YOU HEAR? AND ANY-TIME ANYONE COMES NEAR ME, I'LL SPIT **SETOPLASM** RIGHT DOWN UP THEIR LEFT NOSTRIL.



YOU, YOU WOULDN'T DO THAT? NO, YOU'LL DELEGATE OUR BUSINESS! YOU WOULDN'T...



OH, WOULDN'T I?

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! YOU CAN HAVE YOUR BODY BACK.

HA?



AUNT TILLY SHOUTED IN TRIUMPH  
THEN... WITH CAUTION.

INTACT? NO  
FORMAL DENTIST?

INTACT? NO  
FORMAL DENTIST?



BLOOD  
BACK IN  
IT?

BLOOD, MY GOD, FEEL  
BLOOD? IF YOU'LL  
ONLY TAKE IT AND  
GO?



FAIR ENOUGH  
FIX 'ER UP.  
IT'S A DEAL.

I'LL... TELL THE  
MORTICIAN.



AUNTIE TILLY DIDN'T LOOK AT THE BODY MUCH. HER  
ONLY COMMENT WAS...

NATURAL LOOKIN'. EASY? EASY? PUT THE WICKER  
BARREL DOWN 'T'HE FLOOR WHERE I CAN STEP  
IN IT.



THEN SHE LET HERSELF FALL BACK INTO THE  
WICKER. A BITING SENSATION OF ARTIS GOLDNESS.  
A GREAT UNLIKELY HAZARD, AND A CHORT WHORLING,  
LIKE TWO DROPS OF WATER FUSING TOGETHER.  
WATER TRYING TO SEEP INTO CONCRETE...



THE MORTUARY PEOPLE WATCHED AUNT TILLY'S WHIS-  
GLES, TRYING TO ASSIST WITH BOOSTING AND  
GRUNTING MOVES OF THEIR ARMS AND HANDS. KEEP-  
ING INTO COLD GRANITE, SEEPING INTO A FROZEN  
STATE, SQUEEZING ALL THE WAY.



THE BODY HALF ROLLS, BUSTLING IN THE DRY  
WICKER.

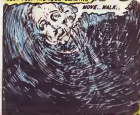
SEE? FEEL?



COME ALIVE, BORN YE. RAISE UP  
A BIT.



LIGHT ENTERED THE MERRID BLIND EYES. THE BODY FELT THE ROOM WARMTH...



MOVE... WALK...

THE BODY TOOK A CREASINGLY UNSTEADY STEP. THE BODY WALKED...



NOW... SPEAK! MUCH DELICED. THANK YOU NOW... GRY!

AND AUNT TILLY BEGAN TO DRY TEARS OF UTTER HAPPINESS...

AND NOW, ANY AFTERNOON ABOUT FOUR IF YOU WANT TO VISIT AUNT TILLY, YOU JUST WALK AROUND AND KNOCK ON HER DOOR. THERE'S A BIG BLACK FUNERAL BREADTH ON IT... BUT DON'T WIND THAT. AUNT TILLY LEFT IT THERE. SHE HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR. JUST RAP ON THE DOOR AND SHE'LL SAY...



IS IT THE MAN IN BLACK?

NO. IT'S ONLY ME, AUNT TILLY!

SHE'LL UNLOCK THE DOUBLE-BARRED, TRIPLE-LOCKED DOOR AND SHE'LL LAUGH AND SAY...



COME IN... QUICKLY!

AND SHE'LL... WHEN THE DOOR OPENS AND ELEM IT SHUT BEHIND YOU SO NO MAN-IN-BLACK CAN EVER SLIP IN WITH YOU. THEN SHE'LL ESCORT YOU IN, AND MARRIE POORN YOU SOME TEA... AND MARRIE... IF YOU'RE SPECIALLY GOOD, SHE'LL GIVE YOU A PRESENT. SHE'LL UNFASTEN THE WHITE LACE AT HER NECK AND CHEST AND, FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, SHOW WHAT LIES BENEATH... THE LONG BLUE AUTOBIOGRAPHY SCAR.

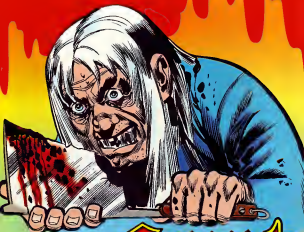


NOT BAD SEWING FOR A MAN!

HEL, HEET YEA, FRIENDS. THAT'S AUNT TILLY'S STORY. THE WAY RAY BRADSHAW TOLD IT TIME.



I HOPE YOU LOVED MY LITTLE SERVING OF SHIVERS FOR THIS ISSUE OF S.F.'S MAG. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE KAGGLE-KIDDER'S, THE KAGGLE OF HORROR '87E, NOW!



# The Crypt Keeper



**TERROR**



NO. 34  
FEB.-MAR.

# TALES



REPRINT  
EDITION

FROM THE

# CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

IN THIS ISSUE:

E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY

**RAY BRADBURY**

AMERICA'S TOP HORROR WRITER!



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HELLO! BACK AGAIN, I SEE! BACK FOR MORE CHILLS IN TALES FROM THE CRYPT? WELCOME, THEN! WELCOME TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! IT'S YOUR MOST IN-HORROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO GURGLE YOUR BLOOD WITH ANOTHER GREEK'S COLLECTOR'S ITEM! SO COME IN! IN THIS YARN, YOU WILL BE THE MAIN CHARACTER! OH, YOU'D LIKE THAT? WELL, WE'LL SEE! EVERYTHING THAT HAPPENS WILL BE SEEN THROUGH YOUR...THE MAIN CHARACTER'S...EYES! READY? THEN START LIVING THE TALE I CALL...

**MIRROR, MIRROR, ON THE WALL!**



YOU OPEN YOUR EYES, AND THE GLARING LIGHT OVERHEAD BLINDS YOU! SUDDENLY YOU REALIZE THAT YOU HAVE BEEN UNDER A SWIRLING SEA OF DARKNESS AND HAVE ONLY NOW COME TO THE SURFACE! A GREY HAZE HANGS OVER YOU... BUT SOON EVEN THAT GLAZES AWAY LIKE COBBERS BRING SWIFT ASIDE BY A PASTOROUSLY WELDED CUSTY! THINGS COME INTO FOCUS! JELLED OBJECTS SLOWLY FREEZE INTO SOLIDITY! A FIGURE RINGS OVER YOU, SHIELDING THE OVERHEAD GLARE FROM YOUR LIGHT-SENSITIVE EYES.



CAN YOU...CAN YOU SEE ME?  
NOO YOUR READ IF YOU CAN!

YOU RISE YOUR HEAD, LOOKING UP AT THE FIGURE BEENDING OVER YOU! HIS READY LITTLE EYES GAWGE BEHIND THICK CRYSTAL-LIKE GLASSES! HE SINGS...

I KNOW IT! I KNOW I COULD DO IT! OH, WE WILL BE FAMOUS! YOU AND I! THE WORLD WILL FLOCK TO SEE US!



YOU LOOK AROUND! YOU ARE IN A SMALL INSTRUMENT-CLUTTERED ROOM! GLASS CABINETS FILLED WITH TEST-TUBES LINE THE WALLS! STRANGE SHAPED MACHINES SURROUND YOU! THE FIGURE STANDING OVER YOU PATS YOUR CHEST REASSURINGLY.

DON'T TRY TO MOVE! JUST LIE THERE! CAN YOU TALK? CAN YOU SAY ANYTHING?



YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH! SOMEWHERE BACK UNDER THAT SEA OF BLACKNESS YOU HAVE JUST RISEN FROM IS THE MEMORY OF SPEECH! YOU OPEN YOUR MOUTH, BUT ONLY A CHOKING GURGLE SPILLS OUT...

THAT'S ALL RIGHT! DO NOT WORRY! YOU WILL TALK AGAIN! I WILL TEACH YOU! NOW... REST...



THE FIGURE WITH THE THICK GLASSES TURNS TO GO! HE MOVES THROUGH THE APPARATUS-CROWDED ROOM TO A DOOR AND OPENS IT! HE REACHES FOR A LIGHT SWITCH...

I WILL BE BACK... LATER! I MUST GO OUT FIRST! NOW! IT IS TIME TO GIVE ANOTHER SHOW! REST! UNTIL LATER...



THE ROOM FALLS INTO DARKNESS AND HE GOES OUT! FOR A WHILE YOU JUST LIE THERE, SUCKING IN THE WARM AIR! THEN YOU TRY TO SIT UP! SOMETHING THING AROUND YOUR CHEST DING IN! YOU ARE STRAPPED DOWN...



YOU TRY TO MOVE YOUR ARMS! THE METAL BARS ACROSS YOUR WRISTS HOLD THEM FAST! YOU CALL OUT, SURPRISED AT THE HAWLED SCREECHINESS OF YOUR OWN VOICE! YOU LOOK DOWN TOWARDS YOUR FEET... AT THE HEAVY SCUFFED SHOES AND THE BARS ACROSS YOUR LEGS...



HOW DID YOU GET HERE? WHAT HAS HAPPENED TO YOU? WHAT IS THIS FIRM TRYING TO DO TO YOU NOW? A COLD GRILL OF FEAR SHIVERS OVER YOU! YOU TUG AND STRAIN! THE STRAPS ACROSS YOUR CHEST PART LIKE PAPER AND YOU SIT UP, TEARING YOUR ARMS LOOSE... YOUR LEGS...



YOU CRAWL THROUGH THE OPEN WINDOW OF THE ROOM OUT INTO THE NIGHT! THE COOL NIGHT, FILLED WITH A THOUSAND VOICES... A MILLION FLOODING STARS! TO YOUR RIGHT, LIGHTS GLEAM BEHIND SILHOUETTED BUILDINGS...



PEOPLE... MANY PEOPLE... MOVE IN THE LIGHT... GAILY LAUGHING... TALKING! SOMEWHERE, A CALLOUSE PLAYS... ITS MUSIC DRIFTING INTO THE DARKNESS! A HARSH VOICE CALLS... LURING... PROMISING...



YOU ARE IN THE REAR ALLEY OF AN AMUSEMENT PARK! THE LIGHT AND THE LAUGHTER AND THE MUSIC AND THE VOICES SEEM TO DANCE YOU... LIKE A MAGNET! YOU MOVE TOWARD THEM... SOME BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS... TOWARD THEM...



THEY'RE CLOSER NOW... THE LAUGHING PEOPLE! THEY MOVE PAST THE ALLEY... A SEA OF FACES... A SEA OF SMILES! AND NOW YOU'RE NEARLY THERE... NEARLY OUT OF THE ALLEY... NEARLY AMONG THEM...



THE WOMAN'S EYES BALDE IN HER BLANCHED FACE? SHE STARES AT YOU! HER HYSTERICAL SCREECH IS LIKE A DOOR SLAMMING OUT THE LAUGHTER... THE VOICES... THE MUSIC! SILENCE FALLS... **TERROR**... **SAD SILENCE**...



SUDDENLY THE DOOR IS OPENED ONCE MORE! ONLY THIS TIME THERE IS NO LAUGHTER... NO MUSIC! SHOUTS OF DANGER... SCREAMS OF TERROR POUR IN AT YOU...



AGAIN, THAT CHILL OF FEAR KNIFE THROUGH YOU! YOU TURN... TURN FROM THE SHOUTS AND THE SCREAMS AND THE BULGING EYES AND BLANCHED FACES... AND YOU RUN... BACK OF THE ALLEY... BACK INTO THE BLACKNESS...



FOOTSTEPS CLATTER AFTER YOU, BUT THEY SOON FACE! THE AMUSEMENT PARK IS VERY FAR AWAY WHEN YOU FINALLY SLOW DOWN TO A WALK! YOU GASP FOR BREATH... AND YOUR HEART POUNDS IN YOUR CHEST LIKE A PISTON! YOU ARE ON A COUNTRY ROAD! THE RIBBON OF CONCRETE WINDS AWAY INTO THE DARKNESS! YOU MOVE ALONG IT...



BEHIND YOU, A GENTLE PURRING GROWS LOUDER AND LOUDER! A CLAP! YOU TURN... FACING INTO THE DROGGIN' HEADLIGHT GLARE...



THE CAR PULLS UP BESIDE YOU! THE DRIVER CALLS TO YOU...

WANT A RIDE INTO TOWN, BUD?



YOU OPEN THE DOOR! FOR A MOMENT HE LOOKS AT YOU, HORRIFIED! THEN HE SCREAMS...



WHY DO THEY SCREAM WHEN THEY SEE YOU? THAT FRIGHTENED, TERRIFYING SCREAMING? YOU WANT TO STOP IT! YOU CLAP YOUR HAND OVER HIS MOUTH! BUT HIS EYES STILL SCREAM...



AND THEN HIS EYES GLAZE... AND ROLL... AND HE IS DEAD! HIS BODY GOES LIMP AND YOU LET IT SLIP AWAY FROM YOU LIKE A SOFT BAG! HE FALLS AGAINST THE STEERING WHEEL AND THE HORN BEGINS TO BLOW... A LONG MONOTONOUS MOAN...



YOU PULL HIM FROM THE CAR AND PUSH HIM TO THE SIDE OF THE ROAD...



THE CAR PURRS ALONG THE CONCRETE RIBBON SMOOTHLY! THE ROAD SLIPS FROM THE DARKNESS AHEAD INTO YOUR HEADLIGHT BEAM AND DOWN UNDER THE HUMMING WHEELS! SOON HOUSES BEGIN TO APPEAR! YOU ARE GOING INTO TOWN! AND THINGS SEEM FAMILIAR TO YOU...



AND THEN YOU SEE IT! THE SMALL WHITE COTTAGE! YOUR FOOT DEPRESSSES THE BRAKE PEDAL AUTOMATICALLY AS YOU SWIRL INTO THE DRIVEWAY! YOU'VE DONE IT A THOUSAND TIMES BEFORE! YOU KNOW IT...



YOU SLIP FROM THE CAR AND CROSS THE FRESHLY CUT LAWN! THE NAME ON THE SIGN STICKING FORWARD IN THE SHRUB BED STRIKES A FAMILIAR NOTE! THE NAME! 'STONE'! SUDDENLY YOU REMEMBER! ARTHUR STONE! THAT'S WHO YOU ARE! AND NANCY, YOUR WIFE... SHE'S WAITING FOR YOU...



YOU HAMMER ANXIOUSLY ON THE REAR GLASS FRONT DOOR! UPSTAIRS, A LIGHT GOES ON! FOOT-STEPS DESCEND INSIDE... COMING CLOSER... COMING DOWN THE STEPS! THE DOOR SWINGS OPEN...



NANCY! EVEN NANCY LOOKS AT YOU LIKE THAT! THOSE EYES... THOSE WIDE, FRIGHTENED, TERRIFIED EYES! AND NOW SHE'S SCREAMING... SCREAMING LIKE THE OTHERS...



AND NOW SHE'S RUNNING ON THE STAIRS, SCREAMING! AND YOU'RE RUNNING AFTER HER... CALLING HER NAME! ONLY IT ISN'T HER NAME THAT ESCAPES FROM YOUR THROAT! IT'S A CHOKING GABGLED, GUTTERAL SCREAM...



AND NOW SHE'S IN THE BEDROOM... AND YOU'RE MOVING TOWARD HER... PLEADING! BUT THERE'S NO RECOGNITION IN HER EYES... ONLY WILD Hysteria! AND SHE'S BACKING AWAY... BACKING TOWARD THE OPEN WINDOW... TOWARD...





SUDDENLY SHE'S GONE... BACKWARDS... OUT THE WINDOW! AND HER SCREAM IS CUT SHORT BY THE BULL THUD AS HER FLAILING BODY HITS THE BACKYARD PATIO BELOW! YOU RUSH TO THE WINDOW... STARRING DOWN AT HER... GORRING...



WHEN YOU GET TO HER/SHE'S DEAD? HER LIFELESS EYES STILL STARE AT YOU IN BLAZING FEAR...



YOU STUMBLE TO THE CAR AND SPEED BACK TO THE CARNIVAL! THE MAN WITH THE BEAMY EYES AND THE THICK GLASSES? HE'S DONE SOMETHING TO YOU! NANCY IS DEAD... AND IT'S HIS FAULT...



AND THEN YOU'RE SLIPPING BACK UP THE AMUSEMENT PARK ALLEY... INTO THE OPEN WINDOW...



YOU? WHERE HAVE YOU BEEN? THE PLACE IS DRAPE AND RUTH DOPE! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE ESCAPED!

YOU'RE MINE! I MADE YOU! I KNEW I COULD DO IT... AND I DID! I TOOK PARTS OF MONSTERS AND I PUT THEM TOGETHER! AND I TOOK A BRAIN... A BRAIN OF A MAN WHO DIED OUT THERE... IN MY GREAT HUSBAND... A MAN NAMED ARTHUR STONE! HE DIED OF A HEART ATTACK... AND I TOOK HIS BRAIN...



I MADE YOU LIVE! I ALWAYS BELIEVED IT WAS POSSIBLE! BUT THERE... IN MY CHAMBER OF HORRORS... THERE'S A TABLEAU OF FRANKENSTEIN... AND HIS MONSTER! YOU'RE MY MONSTER... MY FRANKENSTEIN! WHAT AN EXPERIMENT YOU'LL MAKE! I'LL BE FAMOUS! I'LL... I'LL... DON'T... LOOK AT ME... LIKE THAT! NO! EEEEE...



YOUR FINGERS CLOSE ABOUT HIS THROAT, CUTTING OFF HIS SCREAM! AND EVEN AS THE LIFE PAGES FROM HIS TITCHING BODY, YOU'RE STUFFING YOUR NEATLY STITCHED FINGERS... THE DEER WHISTS... THE SCANNED ARMS...



AND THEN YOU STUMBLE FROM THE ROOM... INTO THE WAX MUSEUM... LEAVING HIS LIFELESS BODY SPRAWLED AMID THE EQUIPMENT...



THEN YOU'RE STARING AT THE TABLEAU... BLOOD-CAROLING GROUPINGS OF HISTORIC HORROR SCENES...



...AND SLOWLY YOU SEE IT! THE MOST REVOLTING SCENE OF ALL! A DISGUSTING MONSTER... A CON-FLAGRATION OF STITCHED FLESH... A LEERING REPULSIVE THING... STARING AT YOU...



THE FRANKENSTEIN MONSTER. NO DOUBT! YOU SLAP YOUR HANDS TO YOUR GUTTERING MOUTH AS THE NAUSEA SWEEPS OVER YOU...



BUT THE MONSTER... THE MONSTER MOVED TOO!



BARBAR! YOU'RE LOOKING INTO A MIRROR? THAT'S WHY IN THERE! THAT REPULSIVE, STITCHED-FLESHED, HORROR MONSTER BEFORE YOU IS YOUR OWN REFLECTION...



YOU SMASH THE MIRROR INTO A THOUSAND GLIMMERING SHINING PIECES IN SHEER DISGUST AND HORROR...



THEN YOU'RE RUNNING...SCREAMING...OUT IN THE MIDWAY...



THE CLATTER OF FOOTSTEPS IS RIGHT BEHIND YOU, AS YOU THREW INTO A DOORWAY...



YOU'RE IN A MAZE... A MAZE OF SMOOTH-WALLED DARK PASSAGES... TRAPPED...



SUDDENLY, THE PASSAGES ARE FLOODED IN BRILLIANT LIGHT! FIGURES LEAP AT YOU FROM ALL SIDES... HORRIBLE, DISFIGURED, SPYGLASS-FLESHED FIGURES...



...AND NO MATTER WHICH WAY YOU TURN, YOUR HADDENING REVELATING REFLECTION GLARES AT YOU... SHOUTS AT YOU... SHRIKES AT YOU IN UTTER REVEL-  
SION...



UNTIL... WHEN THEY FIND YOU... THE LIFE LEFT TO YOUR MON-  
STROUS SEMI-DEAD BODY HAS FAGED... ESCAPED FROM EACH  
COUNTLESS LONG DEAD SECTION... SUBTRACTED FROM THE SUM-  
PRODUCT OF HORROR THAT ADDED UP TO YOU... DRIVEN FROM YOU  
BY THE MADNESS OF YOUR OWN IMAGE...



HEH, HEH? YEP, KIDDIES! AS THEY ALWAYS  
SAY... IF LOOKS COULD KILL... I'LL...  
IN THIS CASE... THEY DID! I HOPE YOU  
LOVED TAKING THE PART OF THE  
MONSTER IN THIS STORY! I ALSO  
HOPE... HEH, HEH... THAT IT DIDN'T  
AFFECT YOU! IF I WERE YOU, I'D  
JUST GO ON TO THE MUSEUM-KEEPER'S  
TALE! IT WOULDN'T...

ER... LOOK IN THE  
MIRROR RIGHT NOW!  
YOU MIGHT SEE  
SOMETHING YOU'LL  
WISH YOU HADN'T!  
HEY, WAIT! DEAR!  
BUT DON'T SAY I  
DIDN'T WARN YOU!  
'BYE, NOW... SEE  
YOU LATER!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELL, NOW THAT THE DRIFT-KEEPER HAS FINISHED DISHING OUT HIS OLD OIL, IT'S MY TURN TO ENTERTAIN YOU FRIENDS! WELCOME ONCE MORE TO THE HALL OF HORROR! THIS IS YOUR VAULT-KEEPER, WITH ANOTHER HORROR TALE FROM MY COLLECTION! AND THIS ONE IS ABOUT OIL...BLACK, GOOPY, MONEY OIL! I CALL THIS BLOOD-CURLING HAIR-RAISER

## OIL'S WELL THAT ENDS WELL!



THE FLASHY CONVERTIBLE CAME TO A STOP AT A POINT ON THE HIGHWAY OVERLOOKING THE SPARKLING MIDWESTERN TOWN! THE TWO MEN IN THE CAR LOOKED DOWN AT THE BOOFTOPS AND SMILED.

WELL, WELL, THERE SHE IS... WAITING FOR US... LIKE A SITTING DUCK... WAITING TO BE PLOCKED.

THERE'S THE TOWN... DOWN THERE IN THE CENTER OF TOWN... AND THERE'S THE CEMETERY...



THE DRIVER TURNED TO THE ONE WITH THE CIGARETTE BETWEEN HIS LIPS...

LOOK, PHIL! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO TALK WITH THAT SUTTY GARDLING FROM YOUR MOUTH? IT DOESN'T LOOK GOOD.

HUNT ON! I'M SORRY, SAM! I FORGOT.



WELL, DON'T FORGET! AFTER ALL! YOU'RE SUPPOSED TO BE AN HONEST BUSINESSMAN! YOU LOOK LIKE A SHAMMY WHEN YOU DO THAT!

OHAY! OHAY! DON'T GET EXCITED, SAM! I'LL BE CAMP FULL!



THE CAR CONTINUED ON DOWN THE HIGHWAY. FINALLY, IT PULLED UP BEFORE THE ONE HOTEL IN TOWN.

ALL RIGHT! ON YOUR TONS! HERE WE GO! I'LL START GETTING THE SHIPS OUT! YOU CHECK IN!

RIGHT, SAM!



THE ONE NAMED SAM STARTED TO UNLOAD THE LUGGAGE FROM THE FLASHY CONVERTIBLE WHILE THE OTHER ONE... PHIL... ENTERED THE HOTEL AND CROSSED THE LOBBY TO THE DESK...

HONOR, STRANGER! WHAT CAN I DO FOR YOU?

I'D LIKE TWO ROOMS... ONE FOR MYSELF AND ONE FOR MY FIELD MAN!



FIELD MAN? WHAT'S THAT?

ALLOW ME TO INTRODUCE MYSELF. MY NAME IS PHILIP GARDNER! OH, I'M A BUSINESSMAN! I LOCATE OIL DEPOSITS FOR BIG OIL COMPANIES! MY FIELD MAN, MR. JIMMISON, HANDLES THE GENERAL SUPERVISION OF PROSPECTIVE SITES! WE'RE JUST PASSING THROUGH!



OH, BUT WHY HERE? I THINK OF LOOKING AROUND THESE PARTS!

THANK YOU! ER... NO! WE'RE ON OUR WAY NORTH.

WHERE SHALL I PUT THE LUGGAGE, MR. GARDNER?



ROOMS 201 AND 202, UP THEM STAIRS AND TURN RIGHT!

YOU HEARD THE GENTLEMAN, MR. JIMMISON?

YES, SIR!



THE MAN BEHIND THE DESK  
SWITCHED AS SAM CARRIED THE  
LUGGAGE UP THE STAIRS AND PAUL  
FOLLOWED...



UPSTAIRS...OUT OF EARSNOT...  
SAM WHISPERED ANGRILY TO PAUL...



LATER... AS NIGHT CAME ON... IN THE  
HOTEL LOBBY...



AND THAT'S ALL YOU DO IN  
LOCATE OIL DEPOSITS,  
AND WHEN THE BIG OIL  
COMPANIES BUY...COLLECT  
YOUR COMMISSION FROM  
THE OWNER OF THE  
LAND?



A LOT BETTER OFF! YOU'RE  
RIGHT! BUT DRILLING  
EQUIPMENT COSTS A  
GREAT DEAL, MR. PAUL!  
MORE THAN I'VE GOTTA  
HAVE TO BORROW...



MR. GARRISON! I'VE GOT TO  
SPEAK TO YOU...  
PRIVATELY!



OIL, MR. GARRISON!  
I'M SURE OF IT!



SAN FOLLOWED PHIL UP THE STAIRS, LEAVING THEM THE HOTEL LOBBY BUZZED WITH EXCITEMENT...



THEY FOUND OIL...  
RIGHT HERE IN TOWN...  
WHERE?  
SEARCH ME...  
ANYBODY SEE WHERE THAT SIMPSON FELLER CAME FROM?

UPSTAIRS IN THE ROOM. THE TWO MEN SMILED. PHIL SHREW THE SHADE ASIDE AND PEERED OUT...



THERE'S A CROWD BATHING IN, SAM! MEN, MEN! DID YOU TAKE CARE OF IT?  
ROBBY WAS AROUND! I TOOK CARE OF IT! SHE'LL DOZE FOR A WEEK! NOW GO AHEAD DOWN AND START THE PITCH... BUT DOWNE THE CIGARETTE FIRST!

FIVE MINUTES LATER, PHIL CAME DOWNSTAIRS. THE LOBBY OF THE HOTEL WAS JAMMED WITH TOWN-FOLK...



IT'D LIKE TO SEE THE MAYOR!  
I, I'M THE MAYOR! JORDON'S MY NAME!

MAYOR JORDON'S HAVE BEEN ADVISED BY MY FIELD MAN THAT THERE IS OIL ON THE TOWN'S PROPERTY... UNDER THE CITY PARK!



THE PARK?

HEY! THE TOWN'S OIL UNDER THE PARK!  
THEY'VE GOT TO GO ON OVER. MAYOR JORDON!  
LET'S GO, MR. JORDON!



THE CROWD STOOD AROUND THE BLACK SLICK THAT SEEPED FROM THE GROUND IN THE PARK...



THERE ARE TWO THINGS YOU CAN DO, MAYOR JORDON! YOU CAN TURN THE LAND OVER TO A PRIVATE OIL COMPANY, OR DRILL FOR IT YOURSELVES...  
BUT WE DON'T KNOW ANYTHING ABOUT DRILLING FOR OIL!

WELL... I COULD HANDLE SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS...  
IT FOR YOU... BUT IT WOULD COST A GREAT DEAL! ABOUT SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS...  
BUT WE COULDN'T AFFORD.



SAY, MAYOR! WHY COULDN'T YOU LET US FOLKS IN TOWN PUT UP THE MONEY FROM A CORPORATION AND ISSUE STOCK...

MARSH JORDON TURNED TO THE SPEND.

WHAT DO YOU SAY, FOLKS? DO WE TURN THE LAND OVER TO A PRIVATE COMPANY, OR RAISE THE MONEY AND DRILL FOR THE OIL OURSELVES?

GASP - BELIEVE!

FEAR! LET'S KEEP IT IN THE FAMILY!



LATER, IN THE HOTEL ROOM...

THEY FELL FOR IT. SAME! THEY'RE GOING TO FORM A CORPORATION AND ISSUE STOCK! I'VE BEEN PUT IN CHARGE OF THE DRILLING!

GOOD! NOW AS SOON AS THEY TURN THE MONEY OVER TO US, WE'LL PULL THE ROUTINE...



A CORPORATION WAS FORMED! STOCK WAS ISSUED! SUBSCRIPTIONS FROM THE TOWNFOLK ROLLED IN.

FINALLY...

WELL, MR. SANDSON! THE STOCK ISSUE HAS BEEN SOLD... EVERY LAST SHARE! HERE'S A CHECK, FOR SIXTY THOUSAND DOLLARS!

GOOD! NOW WE CAN START THE DRILLING!



THEN...

HERE'S THE CHECK, SAM! I JUST CASHED THE CHECK! WHY DON'T WE STOP FOR A MOMENT AND VISIT THE CEMETERY ROUTINE...

NO! WE'LL WANT TO WORK THIS DEAL, ARSON! YOU'VE GOT TO BE KEPT IN THE CLEAR! THE CEMETERY ROUTINE STAYS!



AND JUST TO MAKE SURE YOU DON'T FORGET TO COME AND BID ME UP, I'LL ADD THE CHECK! NOW GIVE ME ONE OF THOSE PILLS, AND PHONE THE ARSON! YOU KNOW WHAT TO SAY!

HERE I'AM...



I'LL DON'T FORGET! BID ME UP WITHIN SIX HOURS AFTER THEY SEND ME! WE'LL PICK UP THE CHECK ON THE WAY OUT OF TOWN! AND FOR CRIME! OUT LOUD, BITE THAT CIGARETTE...

RIGHT! OH...I FORGET! I'LL LONG, SAM!





MAYOR JORDON HUNG UP TO FIND  
BARBON'S HOTEL ROOM IN ANSWER  
TO HIS FRANTIC PHONE CALL.

WHAT DO YOU MEAN,  
THE OIL DEPOSITS  
A FRAUD?

IT'S TRUE!  
WHEN I FOUND  
SIMPSON...  
MY FIELD MAN,  
JONES, AND THE  
DRILLING MONEY  
WENT TOO, I  
CHECKED!



HE POURED OIL  
INTO THAT SANDY  
SPOT IN THE PARK!  
THERE'S AN OIL  
UNDER THERE!  
WE'VE BEEN  
TAKEN/COINED!

WE'LL GET  
HIM! HE  
WON'T GET  
FAR!



JUST OUTSIDE OF TOWN, THEY  
FOUND THE FLAMING CONVERTIBLE.

HE'S  
DEAD!

HEART  
ATTACK,  
PROBABLY.

DID  
YOU  
FIND  
THE  
MONEY/LAR?

MOVIE  
NOT  
A  
DOO-LAR!



PHIL BARBON WAS QUESTIONED CAREFULLY...

I... I TRUSTED HIM! HE'D BEEN WITH  
ME ALMOST A YEAR! I CAN'T BELIEVE  
IT! FIRST, LIVING ABOUT THE OIL...  
THEN STEALING THE MONEY... AND  
NOW THIS! DEAD! I'M... I'M SO  
SORRY FOR ALL THE POLICE THAT  
TRUSTED ME!

IT WASN'T YOUR  
FAULT! DO YOU  
HAVE ANY IDEA  
WHAT HE MIGHT  
HAVE DONE WITH  
THE MONEY, MR.  
BARBON?



DIDN'T HE  
HAVE IT  
WITH  
HIM?

NO? WE SEARCHED CAREFULLY HIS  
CLOTHES... THE CAR! HE PROBABLY  
HID IT SOMEWHERE, PLANNING TO  
COME BACK AND GET IT! NOW,  
IT'S LOST... FOR GOOD!



I'D LIKE TO CLAIM HIS  
BODY... YOU KNOW... GIVE  
HIM A DECENT BURIAL!

OF COURSE, MR. BARBON!  
I'LL GIVE YOU A  
RELEASE!



AND SO, THAT AFTERNOON, SAN SIMPSON WAS BURIED!  
NATURALLY, PHIL HAD MADE SURE THAT SAN'S BODY  
WAS NOT IDENTIFIED...



AND WHEN THE EFFECTS OF THE FILL SAM HAD TAKEN WORK OFF, HE WOKE UP SIX FEET UNDER THE EARTH...

THE WARM THICK LIQUID CONTINUED TO SEEP INTO THE COFFIN AS THE HOURS DRASSED BY...

THE OODS RUSSELED HIGHER AND HIGHER IN THE COFFIN! IT ROSE ABOVE SAM'S EARS...

WHAT'S THAT? SOMETHING STUCK...  
DROPPING INTO THE COFFIN?  
BUBBLY WATER? I SMELL FUNNY...



PHIL WILL BE HERE SOON! HE'LL SMELL ME UP! THEN! THAT SMELL!



PHIL! FOR HERE'S DARK! NOBODY... BEFORE I DROWN! WHAT IS THAT OODS?



SAM WAS PRESSING HIS FACE AGAINST THE SATIN LID OF THE COFFIN, SUGGESTING AT THE LAST TRACES OF AIR WITH THE DRIVING SOUNDED FROM ABOVE...

IT'S PHIL! THANK THE LORD! HURRY, PHIL! WHY WILL I BE GLAD TO SEE YOUR STUPID FACE WITH THAT DAMNING CIGARETTE... AND... AND... NOW I KNOW WHAT THAT STUFF SMELLS LIKE! OY, LORD!



AND AS PHIL LIFTED THE LID OF THE COFFIN, SAM SCREAMED AT HIM, HIS BLACK SHINING FACE RISING FROM THE SURFACE OF THE OODS-FILLED COFFIN...

IT'S OIL... PHIL!

HURT



THE CIGARETTE DANGLE FROM PHIL'S MOUTH DROPPED INTO THE THICK BLACK OIL AS HIS JAW FELL OPEN IN ASTONISHMENT! SUDDENLY, THERE WAS A BLINDING WHITE FLASH...



HEH, HEH? PHIL FORGOT AGAIN? ONLY THIS TIME, SAM BLEW UP? OF COURSE PHIL WENT TO PIECES OVER HIS BAD HABIT, TOO! BUT THE LITTLE TOWN GOT ITS OIL BOOM AFTER ALL! THE SIXTY BRAND SAM HAD HIDDEN WAS NEVER FOUND!

THEY TORE THE FLASHY CONVERTIBLE TO BITS LOOKING FOR IT! WARRA OUT A CAR ON THE INSTALLMENT PLAN... A BIF AT A TIME? WE, NOW! SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, THE VAULT OF HORROR!



# LOVE STORY



I met Negra in my last year at medical school. She had come to the university that year to study medicine as an exchange student from Mecklenburg, Germany.

Dr. Justin McGill was presenting an exhibit in his field of hematology, pertaining to any of the diseases of the blood, and as I was quite interested in this study, I spent much of my free time assisting him in preparing slides of blood smears.

I had just come from the university hospital with a fresh specimen of blood taken from a patient who was a "bleeder", one in whom the constituents of fibrin do not exist in proper proportion or proper quantity, thus preventing a clot to form when bleeding takes place. Many afflicted with this blood deficiency have bled to death from a simple scratch!

Dr. McGill was conducting his hemocytology class when I entered his laboratory. I took a microscope from a wall cabinet and set it up on a table at the back of the room. I placed a few drops of the "bleeder's" non-coagulated blood on a slide and proceeded to study it under high-power.

I raised my head slowly from the eyepiece when a soft voice said in careful, precise English, "May I look at your slide?" It was a girl withraven-black hair and inquisitive dark eyes. Her face was as pale as her neatly starched laboratory frock.

She looked into my microscope. In a few seconds she said, "Hemophilic! Delayed clotting of the blood and consequent difficulty in checking hemorrhages!"

"Right!", I added, surprised at her rapid cell-detection. "It's a congenital condition inherited by males through the mother as a sex-linked character."

"I feel so sorry for the people who are afflicted with it! They can't live a normal life... they have to be so careful! There are so many strange conditions of the blood which are passed on from generation to generation", she said feebly. I thought she was just another medical student going through the usual stages of test-book hypochondria.

I soon learned that Negra was Dr. McGill's best student. She seemed obsessed with a morbid curiosity about blood. Whenever I worked in the lab, or classified types in the plasma depository, she would come to talk to me.

One day she came into the blood bank, her face more blanched than usual. I told her that she was studying too hard and required more rest. I left her in charge of the bank while I went to the medical building to see a dying friend who was waiting away from so visible disease. Incidentally, the poor fellow was a classmate and an acquaintance of Negra's!

When I came back to relieve Negra, there was a red healthy glow to her face!

A few days later, my month-old friend expired. An autopsy showed a definite pernicious anemia. Half of the blood-content of his body had dried up in the course of a few weeks. Only a month before, he had undergone a complete physical and was found well and robust! As an added shock, I found a shortage of some forty-two pints in the blood bank!!

That night I took Negra to town to see a movie. We were returning about midnight when my car was stalled by a sudden rain-storm... wet wires! Negra and I sat in the front seat, watching the rain pounding on the hood and windshield. Soon I began to doze off... but I didn't sleep very long! I was jolted upright by long, deep, gurgling, heaving, inhaling sounds!

I turned towards Negra. Her lips were bloody and her mouth was stretched over the alabaster-white surface of her writhing right forearm! She was swallowing her own blood as fast as she could draw it into her spastically contracting cheeks. But she could never satiate her lustful thirst for death grew stronger, she also grew weaker! As she gained blood, she also lost blood!

Now all was clear to me! Negra had inherited Vampirism as an old family trait. I had read of the ancient blood-suckers of Mecklenburg! When the rain stopped, I set my car... and Negra... ablaze. She would find sweet innocent rest at last!

But why hadn't she inflicted her blood-sucking upon me? Could it be that Negra, the reluctant vampire, was in love with me??

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

I CALL THIS NAUSEATING NURSERY NOVELETTE...

## ATTACKS OF HORROR!



ONCE UPON A TIME...LONG, LONG AGO...THERE WAS A TINY SEASIDE KINGDOM GOVERNED BY A FAT KING WHO WAS MAD ABOUT MONEY...

ONE THOUSAND...TWO THOUSAND...  
THREE THOUSAND...FOUR THOUSAND...  
FIVE...

**KING MONEYMAD!**  
**KING MONEYMAD!**

CAN'T YOU SEE I'M COUNTING MY MONEY, ROYAL ADVISOR! I TOLD YOU NEVER TO INTERRUPT ME WHEN I'M COUNTING MY MONEY! NOW I'LL HAVE TO BEGIN ALL OVER AGAIN! ONE THOUSAND...TWO...

BUT KING MONEYMAD! I'VE GOT IT! I'VE GOT IT! A WAY FOR YOU TO GET MORE MONEY!



THREE THOUSAND... FOUR... WHAT? YOU'VE THOUGHT OF A WAY FOR ME TO GET MORE MONEY. ROYAL ADVISOR? NOW?

TAXES, KING MONEYBAG?

TAXES, ROYAL ADVISOR? WHAT ARE TAXES?

YOU CHARGE PEOPLE A CERTAIN AMOUNT OF MONEY FOR SOMETHING THAT'S CALLED A TAX.

WELL, WHAT DO YOU TAX PEOPLE FOR. ROYAL ADVISOR?

ANYTHING? YOU JUST THINK OF A THING AND TAX THEM FOR IT!



THAT'S ALL THERE IS FOR IT, EH. ROYAL ADVISOR! JUST THINK OF SOMETHING AND TAX THEM FOR IT. I SHALL RIGHT AWAY ISSUE A DECREE, ROYAL ADVISOR...

A TAX DECREE, EH, KING MONEYBAG?

A TAX DECREE? YES! TO ALL THE TITLED PEOPLE IN MY KINGDOM... COUNTS, DUKES, LORDS, EARLS... FOR USING THEIR TITLES, I TAX THEM 10,000 PIECES OF GOLD A YEAR!

SORT OF A 'SIR TAX', EH, KING MONEYBAG? GOOD! I WILL ISSUE THE DECREE IMMEDIATELY!



AND SO, KING MONEYBAG LEARNED ABOUT TAXES! HIS 'SIR TAX' WAS A COMPLETE SUCCESS! MONEY POURED INTO THE ROYAL TREASURY FROM ARMY TITLE-HOLDERS ALL OVER THE KINGDOM...

SEVEN THOUSAND... EIGHT THOUSAND... NINE THOUSAND... TEN...

KING MONEYBAG? KING MONEYBAG?

ROYAL ADVISOR? HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU NOT TO INTERRUPT ME WHEN I'M COUNTING MY MONEY? NOW WHERE WAS I?

KING MONEYBAG! ALL TITLEHOLDERS HAVE PAID THEIR 'SIR TAX'! THERE WON'T BE ANY MORE MONEY COMING IN! THINK OF SOMETHING...



TAKE A DECREE, ROYAL ADVISOR! TO ALL OWNERS OF BOATS? A TAX OF THREE PIECES OF GOLD PER SQUARE YARD OF CANVAS IS HEREBY LEVIED!

'SAILS TAX,' OH, KING? GOOD! I'LL ISSUE THE DECREE, IMMEDIATELY!



AND SO THE 'SAILS TAX' WAS LEVIED! RATE FISHERMEN PROTESTED... BUT TO NO AVAIL...

BUT I HAVE SIXTY SQUARE YARDS OF SAILS! MY FAMILY WILL STARVE!

100 PIECES OF GOLD... OF ELSE...



... AND MONEY FLOWED INTO THE ROYAL TREASURY.

TWELVE THOUSAND... KING MONEYWAD!  
THIRTEEN THOUSAND... KING MONEYWAD!  
FOURTEEN... KING MONEYWAD!



ROYAL ADVISOR! HOW MANY TIMES HAVE I TOLD YOU... OH... WHAT'S THE GOSE? WHAT IS IT NOW?



IT'S THE 'SAILS TAX,' KING MONEYWAD! ALL SAILS HAVE BEEN TAKEN! IF NO MORE MONEY WILL BE COMING IN! NOW WHAT?

ARE THOSE EMPLOYEES STILL WANDERING AROUND THE KINGDOM, ROYAL ADVISOR? THE ONES THAT FELL FORTUNES...



YES, KING MONEYWAD!

TAKE A DECREE, ROYAL ADVISOR! BECAUSE THERE ARE TOO MANY FORTUNE TELLERS IN THE KINGDOM, EACH ONE IS TAXED 100 PIECES OF GOLD...



'EXCESS PROPHETS TAX,' OH, KING? GOOD! I'LL ISSUE THE DECREE...

AND SO THE 'EXCESS PROPHETS TAX' WAS LEVIED! ANGRY EYES? FORTUNE TELLERS PROTESTED... BUT TO NO AVAIL...

BUT I WAS JUST ON MY WAY OUT OF THE KINGDOM! 100 PIECES OF GOLD, OR YOU'LL BE STAYING HERE A LONG, LONG TIME IN A DOWNSIDE!



KING MONEYMAD'S MADNESS FOR MONEY GREW AND GREW AS MORE AND MORE POURED INTO HIS TREASURY! THE MORE HE GOT, THE MORE HE WANTED...

TAKE A DECREE, ROYAL ADVISOR! ANYONE WHO OWNS A FISHING BOAT IS TAXED 90 PIECES OF GOLD.

'POLE TAX' EN, MMS...

NOW, KING MONEYMAD'S KINGDOM WAS A FISHING KINGDOM! SINCE IT WAS LOCATED BY THE SEA, MANY PEOPLE HAD FISHING BOATS! SO, WHEN THE 'POLE TAX' WAS LEVIED...

KING MONEYMAD HAD SOME FAR ENOUGH!

NINETY PIECES OF GOLD FOR A FISHING POLE. HE'S TAKING US INTO POVERTY...



BUT THE PEOPLE OF THE KINGDOM WHO OWNED FISHING BOATS PAID THEIR 'POLE TAX' ANGER...

THIRTY-FIVE THOUSAND... THIRTY-SIX THOUSAND... THIRTY-SEVEN...

KING MONEYMAD! KING MONEYMAD!



NOW WHAT?

THE 'POLE TAX' HAS BEEN COMPLETELY COLLECTED! BUT ANY IDEAS?



TAKE A DECREE! TO ALL THOSE WHO HAVE FISHES IN THEIR HOMES...

'CARPET TAX' EN!



THE PEOPLE OF KING MONEYMAD'S KINGDOM WERE FURIOUS...

90 PIECES OF GOLD BECAUSE I HAVE THAT STRAW MAT ON MY FLOOR...

A CARPET IS A CARPET! PAY UP OR ELSE...



PRACTICALLY EVERYONE HAD AT LEAST A MAT ON THEIR FLOOR! THOSE WHO COULDN'T PAY WERE DRAGGED OFF TO PRISON...

DADDY! DADDY!

NO! NO! DON'T TAKE MY HUSBAND AWAY!

YOU'LL HAVE TO PAY THE 'CARPET TAX'! WHEN IT'S PAID, HE'LL BE RELEASED!



THE MONEY CONTINUED TO POUR  
INTO KING MONEYMAD'S TREASURY.  
SIXTY-EIGHT  
THOUSAND...  
SIXTY-NINE...

KING  
MONEYMAD!

ALL RIGHT,  
ROYAL ADVISOR!  
WHAT'S THE  
BAD NEWS?

THE 'CARPET  
TAX'! IT'S ALL  
PAID OFF!

THEN TAKE THIS DECREE,  
ROYAL ADVISOR! A TAX  
OF 20 PIECES OF GOLD  
EACH IS BEING LEVIED  
ON EVERY THING IN  
THE LAND...

'THUMB  
TAX'!

THIS TAX... THE 'THUMB TAX'... WAS THE LAST STRAW.  
THE PEOPLE HAD BEEN TAXED UNTIL THEY COULD  
PAY NO MORE...

THEY HAVE NO MORE  
MONEY, KING MONEYMAD!  
THEY CANNOT PAY THE  
'THUMB TAX'!

IF THEY CAN'T PAY THE  
'THUMB TAX'... THEN THEY  
CAN'T HAVE THEIR  
THUMBS! TAKE A  
DECREE!

WHAT DOES  
IT SAY?

IT SAYS THAT THE 'THUMB TAX'  
MUST BE PAID, OR THE THUMBS  
WILL BE REMOVED!

GASP!

THOSE WHO COULD NOT PAY WERE LINED UP OUTSIDE  
THE PALACE! THE LINE WAS VERY LONG! KING MONEY-  
MAD SAT IN THE PALACE COURTYARD NEXT TO THE AD-  
VISOR...

ALL RIGHT! BRING THEM IN...  
ONE AT A TIME...

THE KING SAYS  
BRING THEM IN...  
ONE AT A TIME...

THE FIRST MAN WAS CRACKED TO THE CHOPPING  
BLOCK...

FOR NOT PAYING YOUR  
'THUMB TAX', YOU MUST  
LOSE YOUR THUMBS...

NO! MERCY!  
MERCY!






# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLO! YEP, KIDNOS, IT'S YOUR HOSTESS IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR, THE OLD WITON, STIRRING HER CAULDRON AGAIN, READY TO SERVE YOU ANOTHER HORROR HELPING. THE RECKING RECIPE I'VE COOKED UP THIS TIME WAS FIRST DISHED OUT BY A VERY DEAR FRIEND OF MINE, AMERICA'S FOREMOST FANTASY WRITER, **RAY BRADBURY**! SO, TUCK YOUR DRUGS UNDER YOUR CHINS, AND I'LL FEED YOU MY ADAPTATION OF MR. BRADBURY'S...

**THERE WAS AN  
OLD WOMAN!**



THE TALL DARK YOUNG MAN STOOD QUIETLY, NOT MOVING. AGENT TILDY SHOOK HER HEAD, FUSING WITH HER KNITTING...

NO? THERE'S NO USE ARGUING. I GOT MY MIND FIXED. YOU RUN ALONG WITH YOUR SILLY BROKEN BASKET, LANDLADY. WHEN'D YOU EVER GET MOTIONS LIKE THAT? YOU JUST GET OUT OF HERE AND DON'T BOTHER ME.

THE TALL DARK MAN SAT DOWN. HE JUST SAT THERE, STARRING. THE BONG-PORCPLAIN, FLOWERED CLOCK ON THE MANTLEPIECE THROE, OUT IN THE HALL, ORGURED AROUND THE WICKER BASKET. FOUR MEN WAITED, DAZZLY, HARDLY MOVING, AS IF THEY WERE THERE.

NOW ABOUT THAT WICKER BASKET. IT'S NOT *JUST* FEET LONG, AND BY THE LOOK OF IT, IT *AIN'T* LAUNDRY. AND THOSE FOUR MEN YOU WALKED IN WITH, YOU DON'T NEED THEM TO CARRY THE BASKET. WHY, IT'S LIGHT AS *THRILLER* FISH.

THE DARK YOUNG MAN WATCHED AUNT TILTY SOMETHING IN HIS FACE SUGGESTED THAT THE BASKET WOULDN'T BE SO LIGHT AFTER A WHILE. THERE'D BE SOMETHING IN IT.

NOW WHERE'VE I SEEN A WICKER LIKE THAT BEFORE? SEEMS TO ME... OH! NOW I REMEMBER! IT WAS WHEN MRS. DRYDEN PASSED AWAY NEXT DOOR.



AUNT TILTY SETHER KNITTING DOWN STEADILY.

SO THAT'S WHAT YOU'RE HERE FOR, I *THOUGHT* YOU WERE WORKIN' TO *SELL* ME SOMETHING. WELL YOU JUST BET TELL *EARLY* COMES HOME, SHE'LL TAKE CARE OF YOU. WE'LL SEND YOU OUT OF THE HOUSE SO *QUICK* I'LL...



THE DARK MAN LOOKED AT AUNT TILTY AS IF SHE WERE TIED.

NOT I'M NOT I'M NOT TIED. GREAT BONS O' SORROW ON THE SILBERTY FIRE, I GOT A HUNDRED COMFORTERS, TWO HUNDRED SWEATERS, AND SIX HUNDRED POE-HOLDERS IN THESE FINGERS. NO MATTER HOW BRINKT THEY ARE, YOU RUN AND COME *BACK* WHEN THEY'RE DONE... AND MAYBE I'LL TALK TO YOU.



THERE WAS A NOISE. THE MANTEL CLOCK BOUNDED THREE. STRANGER! IT SEEMED TO HER THAT IT HAD CHIMED THREE ONCE BEFORE.

ARE YOU JUST GOIN' TO *SIT* THEM, YOUNG MAN?



He was...

THEN, YOU DON'T NEED IF I TAKE A NAP. JUST A CAT-NAP. NOW YOU DON'T GET UP OFF THAT CHAIR. YOU SET THERE. YOU SET THERE AND DON'T COME CREEP'N AROUND ME. JUST GOIN' TO CLOSE MY EYES FOR A WHOLE SPELL....



SO FEATHERY. NO DROWSE. NO DEEP, UNDER WATERS. ALMOST. OH, SO NICE. WHO'S THAT MOVIN' AROUND IN THE DARK WITH MY EYES CLOSED? WHO'S THAT *KISSIN'* MY CHEEK? FORGIE ME, CHILTY NO. GUESS IT WAS MY THOUGHTS. ONLY DREAMIN', DRIFTIN' OFFTIN OFF... OH.



THE CLOCK CHIMED THREE AGAIN. AUNT TILDT SAT UP. THE YOUNG MAN IN THE DARK SUIT STOOD NEAR THE DOOR. "YOU LEAVIN' SO SOON, YOUNG MARY?"

"GOOD THING! EMILY'S COMIN' HOME AND SHE'D FIX YOU, HAD TO GIVE UP, DIDN'T YOU COULDN'T CONFIDE ME, COULD YOU? WELL, YOUNG MAN, YOU NEEDN'T BOTHER COMIN' BACK TO TRY AGAIN!"



THE DARK YOUNG MAN BOWED WITH SLIGHT GRINITY. HE HAD NO INTENTION OF COMING BACK, EVER.

FINE. WHY YOU COULDN'T SET ME OUT OF THIS HOUSE. HOSIERS? WHY, I'M GOING TO KILT IN THIS WINDOW THE NEXT THOUSAND YEARS. THEY'LL HAVE TO OPEN THE SHARDS AROUND ME TO... TO... BUT LOOKIN' LIKE THE CAT THAT ATE THE BIRD? SET OUT AND TOTE THAT POOL WICKER BOX WITH YOU!"



THE FOUR MEN TREADED HEAVILY OUT THE FRONT DOOR. TILDT STUDIED THE WAY THEY HANDLED THE WICKER. IF WASN'T HEAVY, YET THEY STAMMERED WITH ITS WEIGHT. SHE BLANCED ABOUT CONCERNEDLY...

"HERE, NOW? DID YOU STEAL SOME OF MY ANTIQUES? MY BOOKS? NO. THE CLOCKS? NO. WHAT YOU GOT IN THAT WICKER?"



THE DARK MAN OFFERED THE LID OF THE WICKER TO AUNT TILDT. IN PANTHOMIE HE WONDERED IF SHE'D LIKE TO OPEN IT AND TAKE INSIDE...

"SUREST? SET? SHAM, NO. SET OUT! SET OUT! HERE! HOSIERS!"



THE DOOR BLANNED. THAT WAS BETTER DARNED POOL MEN WITH THEIR MAGGOTTY IDEAS...

"AN, HERE COMES EMILY. ABOUT FIVE. BUT, LARD SHE LOOKS PALE AND FOMMY TODAY. WALKIN' SO SLOW..."



EMILY SHUFFLED INTO THE HALLOR, HEAD DOWN. "EMILY, I BEEN WAITIN' FOR YOU. THERE WAS THE DARNDDEST POOL MEN JUST HERE WITH A WICKER. GLAD YOU'RE HOME!" EMILY...



"EMILY! STOP SCREAMING!"



A WHITE-SMOKED MAN, EVIDENTLY A MORTICIAN, GLANCED UP FROM THE RECENTLY ARRIVED WOMAN AS AUNT TILLY STORMED INTO THE MORTUARY.

"MADAME! THIS IS NO FIT PLACE FOR A GENTLE WOMAN!"

"WELL, BLAD YOU FEEL THAT WAY, THEN'S MY SENTIMENTS, EXACTLY. I DON'T WANT *ME* HERE! I WANT *ME HOME!*" I GOT EMILY TO FEEL! SWEATERS TO *KNIT!* GLOVES TO *WIND!*...

THE MORTICIAN LOOKED AT HER, THEN AT THE WICKER. HE MOUTHED HIS WORDS WITH APPARENT RELIGION, AND A WINKING OF HIS EYES, TUBES, JARS AND INSTRUMENTS...

"MADAME! I HAVE *WORK* TO DO! A *BODY* HAS ARRIVED!"

"YOU LAY SO MUCH AS A *DEFENSE* ON THAT BODY AND I'LL THROAT YOU!"

THE MORTICIAN OPENED THE WICKER LID GRABBERLY THEN, IN A MOMENTARY SERIES OF SOMETHINGS, HE REALIZED THAT THE BODY *WAS*. IT SEEMED... COULD IT BE...

"OH... THIS LADY, HERE? SHE IS... RELATIVE?"

"WOW! FOOL! ME? DO YOU HEART ME? I WANT MY BODY BACK!"

THE MORTICIAN CONSIDERED THE IDEA. HE SHOOK HIS HEAD.

"NO THINGS LIKE THIS DON'T *SUPPLY* SECRET! SHOW HER OUT! GET HELP FROM THE *OTHERS!* I CAN'T WORK WITH A *GRAND* PRESENT!"

THE FOUR MEN ASSEMBLED AND CONVERSED. AUNT TILLY WAS A LONE FORTRESS, ARMS CROSSED IN DEFIANCE.

"DON'T *BUDGE* THEN!"

SHE REPEATED THIS AS SHE WAS EVICTED IN CON-CESSIONS MOVES, LIKE A PAWN ON A CHESSBOARD, FROM THE LABORATORY. FINALLY, SHE SAT DOWN ON A CHAIR IN THE VESTIBULE OF THE FUNERAL PARLOR. THERE WERE FEWS GOING BACK INTO SILENCE, AND A FLOWER SMELL...

"YOU CAN'T SIT *THERE*, MA'AM! THAT'S WHERE THE *BODY* RESTS FOR THE *SERVICES* THROUSON!"

"I'M *SITTING* HERE! TELL I GET WHAT I WANT!"

MR. GARRINGTON, MORTUARY PRESIDENT, HEARD THE DISTURBANCE AND CAME TRODING DOWN THE AISLE TO INVESTIGATE.

"HERE, HERE! MORE RESPECT FOR MADAME. MAY I HELP YOU?"

"GO IN THAT BACK ROOM THERE AND TELL THAT *EAGER* INVESTIGATOR TO SHUT *FOOLING* WITH MY *BODY!*"

MR. CARRINGTON HURRIED OFF AFTER FIFTEEN MINUTES OF COMPARING NOTES WITH THE MORTICIAN BEHIND CLOSED DOORS. HE RETURNED, THREE SHADES WHITER.

MR. CARRINGTON: "THAT IS... MOST IRREGULAR! MOST IRREGULAR! MOST IRREGULAR!"



BUT HE'S ALREADY PUMPING THE BLOOD FROM THE BODY!



WHAT?

YES, YES. SO, YOU JUST GO AWAY, NOW. THERE'S NOTHING TO BE DONE. THE BLOOD'S RUNNING AND SOON THE BODY'LL BE ALL FILLED WITH RICE, FRESH FORMALDEHYDE, AND BEDDIE... HE'S ALSO PERFORMING A SILENT AUTOPSY!



CUT-THAT WE IS NOT

IF-YET TO DETERMINE CAUSE OF DEATH, Y'KNOW, HE



WASH STRAIGHT IN AND FEEL THAT CUM-UP TO PUMP ALL THAT FINE NEW ENGLAND BLOOD RIGHT BACK INTO THAT FINE-SKINNED BODY! AND IF HE'S TAKEN ANYTHING OUT OF HIM TO ATTACH IT BACK IN SO IT'LL FUNCTION PROPER! YOU HEAR?



THERE'S NOTHING I CAN DO, MORTUARY!



ALL RIGHT! I'M GETTIN' HERE. THE NEXT TWO HUNDRED YEARS! YOU HEAR? AND ANYTIME ANYONE COMES NEAR ME, I'LL SPIT BEDFORDIAN RIGHT DOWN THEIR LEFT NOSTRIL.



YOU, YOU WOULDN'T DO THATT' HUH, YOU'LL DELEGATE OUR BUSINESS! YOU WOULDN'T...



OH, WOULDN'T I?

ALL RIGHT! ALL RIGHT! YOU CAN HAVE YOUR BODY BACK.



HA?



AUNT TILLY SHOUTED IN TRIUMPH  
THEN... WITH CAUTION.

INTACT? NO  
FORMAL DENTIST?

INTACT? NO  
FORMAL DENTIST?



BLOOD  
BACK IN  
IT?

BLOOD, MY BOO, FEEL  
BLOOD? IF YOU'LL  
ONLY TAKE IT AND  
GO?



FAIR ENOUGH  
FIX 'ER UP.  
IT'S A DEAL.

I'LL... TELL THE  
MORTICUARY.



AUNTIE TILLY DIDN'T LOOK AT THE BODY MUCH. HER  
ONLY COMMENT WAS...

NATURAL LOOKIN'. EASY? EASY? PUT THE WICKER  
BARREL DOWN 'T'HE FLOOR WHERE I CAN STEP  
IN IT.



THEN SHE LET HERSELF FALL BACK INTO THE  
WICKER. A BITING SENSATION OF ARTIS GOLDNESS.  
A GREAT UNLIKELY HAZARD, AND A CHORT WHORLING,  
LIKE TWO DROPS OF WATER FUSING TOGETHER.  
WATER TRYING TO SEEP INTO CONCRETE...



THE MORTUARY PEOPLE WATCHED AUNT TILLY'S WHIS-  
GLES... TRYING TO ASSIST WITH BOOSTING AND  
GRUNTING MOVES OF THEIR ARMS AND HANDS. KEEP-  
ING INTO COLD GRANITE. SEEPING INTO A FROZEN  
STATE... SQUEEZING ALL THE WAY.



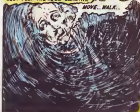
THE BODY HALF ROLLS, BUSTLING IN THE DRY  
WICKER.

SEE? FEEL?



COME ALIVE, BORN YE. RAISE UP  
A BIT...

LIGHT ENTERED THE MERRID BLIND EYES. THE BODY FELT THE ROOM WARMTH...



MOVE... WALK...

THE BODY TOOK A CREASINGLY UNSTEADY STEP. THE BODY WALKED...



NOW... SPEAK! MUCH DELICED. THANK YOU NOW... GRY!

AND AUNT TILLY BEGAN TO DRY TEARS OF UTTER HAPPINESS...

AND NOW, ANY AFTERNOON ABOUT FOUR IF YOU WANT TO VISIT AUNT TILLY, YOU JUST WALK AROUND AND KNOCK ON HER DOOR. THERE'S A BIG BLACK FUNERAL BREADTH ON IT... BUT DON'T WIND THAT. AUNT TILLY LEFT IT THERE. SHE HAS A SENSE OF HUMOR. JUST RAP ON THE DOOR AND SHE'LL SAY...



IS IT THE MAN IN BLACK?

NO. IT'S ONLY ME, AUNT TILLY!

SHE'LL UNLOCK THE DOUBLE-BARRED, TRIPLE-LOCKED DOOR AND SHE'LL LAUGH AND SAY...



COME IN... QUICKLY!

AND SHE'LL... WHEN THE DOOR OPENS AND ELEM IT SHUT BEHIND YOU SO NO MAN-IN-BLACK CAN EVER SLIP IN WITH YOU. THEN SHE'LL ESCORT YOU IN, AND MABBE POAN YOU SOME TEA... AND MABBE... IF YOU'RE SPECIALLY GOOD, SHE'LL GIVE YOU A PRESENT. SHE'LL UNFASTEN THE WHITE LACE AT HER NECK AND CHEST AND, FOR A BRIEF MOMENT, SHOW WHAT LIES BENEATH... THE LONG BLUE AUTOPOY SCAR.



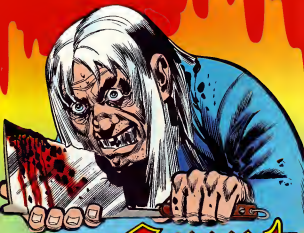
NOT BAD SEWING FOR A MAN!

HEL, HEET YEA, FRIENDS. THAT'S AUNT TILLY'S STORY. THE WAY RAY BRADSHAW TOLD IT TIME.



I HOPE YOU LARDED MY LITTLE SERVING OF SHIVERS FOR THIS ISSUE OF S.F.'S MAG. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE KAGGLE-KIDDEEN'S, THE KAGGLE OF HORROR '87E, NOW!





# The Crypt Keeper



**TERROR**



**NO. 35**  
**APR - MAY**

# TALES



**REPRINT  
EDITION**

**FROM THE**

# CRYPT

®

**FEATURING...**



**THE CRYPT-KEEPER**



**THE OLD WITCH**



**THE VAULT-KEEPER**



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! WELCOME BACK, **FRIENDS!** WELCOME ONCE AGAIN TO THE **CRYPT OF TERROR!** THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, THE **CRYPT-KEEPER**, READY TO NARRATE ANOTHER HAUNTING TALE FROM MY COLLECTION! SO COME IN! SIT DOWN ON THAT SACK OF SILVER DOLLARS THERE AND I'LL BEGIN! THIS STORY HAPPENED TO A YOUNG CHAP NAMED **PETER!** IT'S IN HIS VERY OWN WORDS! I'LL TELL IT TO YOU THE WAY HE TOLD IT TO ME! HE CALLED THIS **SPINE-TINGLING, HAIR-STANDING, BLOOD-FREEZER...**

## BY THE FRIGHT OF THE SILVERY MOON!



MY NAME IS **PETER GRINA**, I AM FIFTEEN YEARS OLD, MY FATHER, ALSO **GRINA**, HAD BROUGHT ME AND MY BROTHER **EDWARD** TO THIS COUNTRY FROM HUNGARY SOON AFTER THE END OF THE LAST WAR, WITH THE MEAGER AMOUNT OF MONEY THAT MY FATHER HAD MANAGED TO SAVE. HE'D BOUGHT A SMALL FARM IN THE MID-WEST. EVERYTHING SEEMED TO BE GOING ALONG FINE FOR US WHEN...



"PAPA! PAPA!  
COME QUICKLY!"

WHAT IS IT,  
EDWARD?

HE IS  
WHITE AS  
A GHOST!  
PAPA!



IT'D HAPPENED ABOUT A YEAR AFTER HE'D ARRIVED IN AMERICA. EDWARD, MY YOUNGER BROTHER, HAD BEEN OUT IN THE FIELDS. SUDDENLY, HE'D COME CRASHING ACROSS THE FARMYARD, SCREAMING FOR MY FATHER.

THERE'S A DEAD MAN, PAPA! IN THE CORN-FIELD! COME QUICKLY!

A DEAD MAN? WHERE? SHOW ME!

I'M COMING TOO!



I FOLLOWED MY FATHER AND EDWARD TO THE CORNFIELD. THE MAN WAS THERE, ALL RIGHT! ALL THAT WAS LEFT OF HIM! HE'D BEEN HORRIBLY MUTILATED... AS THOUGH

TOO GOOD FOR HIM! HE'S ATTACKED... BY A WILD BEAST!

BUT PAPA! THERE ARE NO WILD BEASTS AROUND HERE!

EDWARD IS RIGHT, PAPA!



THEN... THEN IT IS THE WORK OF A WEREWOLF!

A WERE-WOLF?

PAPA!



MY FATHER LOOKED AT EDWARD AND ME, A DARKNESS CLODDING HIS FACE.

I'D THOUGHT THAT WE HAD LEFT SUCH HORRORS AS WERE-WOLVES BEHIND US... IN HUNGARY! I SEE THAT I AM WRONG!

ARE YOU SURE, PAPA? ARE YOU SURE IT IS A WERE-WOLF?



HE TURNED AND STARTED BACK TO THE HOUSE.

I AM SURE, YES, PAPA! EDWARD! COME! WE MUST GO TO THE TOWN... TO TELL THEM WHAT WE HAVE FOUND!

PAPA! YOU'RE NOT GOING TO TELL THEM I MEAN...



NO, PETER! I AM NOT GOING TO TELL THEM THAT I THINK IT IS THE WORK OF A WEREWOLF! THEY WOULD NOT BELIEVE IT... ANYWAY!

WEREWOLVES IN AMERICA! I CAN HARDLY BELIEVE IT MYSELF!



SO MY FATHER DROVE US INTO TOWN, MY BROTHER EDWARD AND MYSELF, AND SOON OUR LITTLE TOWN WAS ALIVE WITH THE CURIOUS WHO CAME OUT FROM ALL AROUND TO SEE THE CORPSE THERE...



TOWN TO SHAME! HORRIBLE! CHOW!

THE SHERIFF QUESTIONED MY FATHER FOR SOME TIME...  
AND YOU HEARD NO... I HEARD  
SOUNDS, MR. SEDGWICK. NOTHING  
NO GRUES... LAST  
NIGHT?



I CAN'T FIGURE WHAT  
COULD HAVE DONE IT! IT  
LOOKS LIKE A WILD  
ANIMAL ATTACKED HIM,  
YET WE AIN'T GOT  
NOTHIN' LIKE THAT  
YOUNG HERE! ANY  
IDEAS, MR. SEDGWICK?



MEANWHILE, MY YOUNGER BROTHER  
WAS MESSING WITH THE LOCAL  
FARM-BOYS...  
MAYBE IT  
WAS AN  
ESCAPED  
LION...FROM  
A CIRCUS?  
AN, WE  
WOULDN'T  
HEARD  
ABOUT  
IT ON  
THE  
RADIO!  
MY PAPA  
SAID IT  
WAS A  
WEREWOLF!



A...A  
WEREWOLF?  
WHAT'S  
THAT?  
A WEREWOLF IS A  
HUMAN BEING WHO  
CHANGES WHEN THE  
FULL MOON COMES  
UP, INTO A HORRIBLE  
FLESH-OR-BONE  
WOLF!



AM! SOME  
BOOK STUFF!  
WHO BELIEVES  
IN THAT JUNK?  
IN MY OLD COUNTRY,  
IN HUNGARY, THE  
PEOPLE THERE  
BELIEVE IN  
WEREWOLVES!  
EDWARD!



TELL THEM, PETER! TELL  
THEM THAT THERE REALLY  
ARE SUCH THINGS AS  
WEREWOLVES!  
MY MY BROTHER  
HAS A VIVID  
IMAGINATION!  
YOU... YOU SHOULD  
EXCUSE HIM!  
SOME TIMES,  
EDWARD!  
But  
WE  
DON'T  
BELIEVE  
HIM, ANY-  
WAY!



I PUSHED EDWARD INTO THE HOUSE...  
WHY DON'T  
YOU LEARN  
TO KEEP YOUR  
BIG MOUTH  
SHUT?  
BUT WHAT HARM  
IS THERE IN  
TALKING ABOUT  
WEREWOLVES?  
WEREWOLVES?  
GUP WHO  
SAID SOME-  
THIN' 'BOUT  
WEREWOLVES?



IT WAS SHERIFF HUSSON? HE'D OVERHEARD US! HE STOOD THERE, BLARING DOWN AT US! HIS EYES WERE ANCHORED...

WELL...WHAT ABOUT WEREWOLVES?

IF NOTHING, SIR? WE DIDN'T SAY...

FATHER SAYS IT'S THE WORK OF A WEREWOLF... THAT'S ALL I KNOW!

FORWARD?

OH, HE DID SO? WE CAME FROM A WEREWOLF, DID WE?

IN A MANNER, WHERE WE CAME FROM, THERE ARE MANY WEREWOLVES! DURING THE DAY, THEY ARE JUST LIKE ORDINARY HUMAN BEINGS. BUT ON THE NIGHT THAT THE MOON IS FULL... THEY CHANGE...

THEY CHANGE INTO A WOLF, EAT AND THEY EAT HUMAN FLESH?

W-WHY, SHERIFF? YOU KNOW ALL ABOUT THEM, DON'T YOU?

PETER! I DO! OKAY, BOYS! LET'S GO! WHAP THAT CRITTER IN A KNOCK AND LET'S CLEAN OUT OF HERE!

OHAY, SHERIFF!

AFTER THE SHERIFF AND HIS DEPUTIES AND THE TOWNSFOLK HAD LEFT OUR FARM, I TOLD MY FATHER ABOUT EDWARD... AND HIS BIG MOUTH...

...AND HE TOLD EVERYBODY... EVEN THE SHERIFF!

WELL! I WOULDN'T WORRY TOO MUCH, PETER! THEY WON'T BELIEVE IT, ANYWAY!

BUT FATHER WAS WRONG! SHERIFF HUSSON WENT BACK TO TOWN TO HIS OFFICE AND...

HARDLY HE THAT ALMANAC THERE, HERE? SOMETHING I WANT TO LOOK UP!

SURE THING, SHERIFF! HERE Y'ARE!

SHERIFF HUSSON FLIPPED THROUGH THE PAGES OF THE ALMANAC... FOUND WHAT HE WANTED... AND STOOD IT FOR SOME TIME...

KNOW SOMETHING, HENRY? LAST NIGHT WAS THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON!

FULL MOON? SO WHAT?

SHERIFF HADSON MADE A TRIP TO THE TOWN LIBRARY AFTER THAT! HE WANTED TO READ UP ON...

WEREWOLVES? OH, DEAR! LET ME SEE! W...B! W... WEREWOLVES! AH... YES, WE HAVE A BOOK THAT COVERS THE SUBJECT...

LET ME SEE IT, EN, MISS FURLEY!



ABOUT A MONTH LATER, I WAS AWAKENED FROM A FITFUL SLEEP BY THE SOUND OF A DISTANT HOWLING. I GOT UP AND RAN TO MY FATHER'S BEDROOM. HE WAS FAST ASLEEP...

PAPER WOULD...

HUNT RETENT THAT YOU...



WE SAT FOR A WHILE LISTENING TO THE HOWLS! MY FATHER REASSURED ME, PUTTING MY BACK...

PROBABLY JUST AN OLD DOG HOWLING AT THE MOON, MY SON! GO BACK TO SLEEP!

I-YES, PAPA!



BUT LATER THAT NIGHT, I WAS AWAKENED BY...

PETER! SOMEONE'S HAMMERING ON THE DOOR! WAKE UP!

WHA...? OH, FORWARD! WHO IS IT?



WE HEARD ANGRY VOICES! WE TIPTOED TO THE KITCHEN! FATHER WAS ARGUING WITH SOME MEN! SHERIFF HADSON WAS WITH THEM...

NO! YOU ARE WRONG! I AM NO WEREWOLF! I SWEAR IT!

YOU'VE COME FROM HUNGARY, DON'T YOU? WOLFSGANG STRODE IN HUNGARY!



WE COVERED IN THE DOORWAY... FRIGHTENED... LISTENING...

YES! BUT I...

WE FOUND ANOTHER VICTIM! HE WAS KILLED TONIGHT! TURN TO PAGES AND PARTIALLY EATEN! THERE'S A FULL MOON OUT TONIGHT, WEREWOLVES AT LARGE WHEN THE MOON IS FULL!



AND WE REMEMBERED... WE DIDN'T HAVE NO KILLING LIKE THIS BEFORE YOU'VE COME HERE!

WE DIDN'T HAVE NO KILLING LIKE THIS BEFORE YOU'VE COME HERE!

SO HOW MUST WE THE WEREWOLF...



THEY GRABBED MY FATHER AND DROGGED HIM FROM THE HOUSE.

PAPA! PAPA!

WE KNOW HOW TO GET RID OF A WEREWOLF, DEEPA! HARK, HERE, CAME A SILVER BULLET!



PAPA... SOB... PAPA...

HE... HE'S DEAD, EDWARD! THEY KILLED HIM!



EDWARD LOOKED AT ME WITH TEAR-FILLED EYES...

PAPA WASN'T... SOB... THE WEREWOLF WAS HE, PETER? SOB... SOB...

NO! HE COULDN'T HAVE BEEN! I SAW HIM TONIGHT, SLEEPING IN HIS ROOM!



EDWARD'S FACE BEGAN GRIMACE AS HE CHOKED BACK HIS TEARS.

I'LL GET HIM! I'LL GET THE WEREWOLF! I KNOW WHO IT IS! I CAN TELL!

WHO, EDWARD? WHO IS IT?



IT'S THAT SHERIFF! DID YOU EVER NOTICE THE WAY HIS EYEBROWS BROW TOGETHER? THAT'S THE SIGN OF A WEREWOLF! NEXT MONTH, WHEN THE MOON IS FULL, I'LL WAIT FOR HIM... AND...

WHAT CAN YOU DO, EDWARD? YOU HAVE NO POW... NO SILVER BULLET!



NO, BUT I HAVE THESE! A SLAND-CHOP! AND A SILVER DOLLAR!

A SLAND-CHOP! AND A SILVER DOLLAR! BUT HOW CAN YOU KILL A WEREWOLF WITH A SILVER DOLLAR...





IT TOOK EDWARD MANY DAYS TO FILE DOWN THE EDGE OF THE SILVER DOLLAR TILL IT WAS razor-sharp...

YOU SEE, PETER! ONCE I HAVE SHARPENED THE EDGE, I WILL HAVE A LETHAL SILVER MISSILE...

AND YOU WILL FIRE IT WITH THE BLIND-SHOT?



AND SO I TOO SET ABOUT SHARPENING THE EDGE OF A SILVER DOLLAR, AND FASHIONING A POWERFUL BLIND SHOT...



...AND WHEN THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON CAME, MY YOUNGER BROTHER, EDWARD AND I WERE READY...

DOUBT, PETER! IT IS FINE! WE MUST GO.

YES, EDWARD!



EXACTLY! I MEAN TO AVENGE OUR FATHER'S DEATH! HE WAS INNOCENT! AND I WILL PROVE IT!

WE WILL DO IT TOGETHER, EDWARD! IN THREE WEEKS, WHEN THE MOON IS FULL, WE WILL CLEAR OUR FATHER'S NAME TOGETHER!



WE CROSSED THE FIELDS TOWARD TOWN... LISTENING, HOPING...

NOTHING! WHAT WAS THAT?

I HEARD NOTHING, EDWARD!



AND THEN WE SAW IT... A SHADOWY FIGURE STEALING DOWN A LONELY COUNTRY ROAD...

LOOK! IS THAT HIM? UP AHEAD!

LET'S SEPARATE, PETER! YOU GO THAT WAY! I'LL GO THIS WAY!



BEFORE I COULD OBJECT, EDWARD HAD DARTED OFF INTO THE WOODS! I STOOD THERE FOR A MOMENT... HESITATING! THEN I SWUNG OFF INTO THE TREES ON THE OTHER SIDE OF THE ROAD! WE WERE GOING TO CIRCLE AROUND, CUT HIM OFF! SUDDENLY...



I RAN AS FAST AS I COULD TOWARD THE SCREAMING...SLIPPING THE RAZOR-SHARP SILVER DOLLAR INTO THE SLAND-THO!

EDWARD? I'M COMING!  
I'M COMING!



AS I BURST OUT INTO THE CLEARING, I SAW IT! A HORRIBLE, HAIRY, RED-EYED CREATURE...ITS MOUTH DRIPPING BLOOD...BANGING OVER ITS VICTIM...

EDWARD? I... OH, MY LORD!  
WHAT HAVE YOU  
DONE TO HIM...



I TOOK CAREFUL AIM...



...AND LET MY THREE-SHOT SHOOT!



THE SILVER DOLLAR ENTERED THE WEREWOLF'S THUNDERING THROAT...



...AND IT PITCHED FORWARD! AND THEN AS I WATCHED, THOSE DISTASTING FANGS BARRACK...THE HAIR DISAPPEARED...THE EYES DARK-ENED...AND THE AGONIZED FACE OF MY YOUNGER BROTHER TOOK SHAPE...

EDWARD, GHOST!  
OH, GOD...EDWARD...



HEH, HEH! YES, KIDDER! FOUNO  
EDWARD WAS THE WEREWOLF ALL  
ALONG! ONLY HE DIDN'T EVEN KNOW  
IT! AND THAT'S THE STORY THE WAY  
PETER DEEMED TOLD IT TO ME! THAT  
THAT NIGHT, HE AND EDWARD DID  
CLEAR THEIR FATHER'S NAME!  
MISSED UP EDWARD'S, THOUGH! OH,



BY THE WART  
PETER'S GIVEN ME  
A NICE REASON!  
THINK I'LL TURN  
IT OVER TO THE  
OLD WITCH!  
IT'S FOR  
HONORATION  
HONOR-OSH!  
SEE YOU LATER!  
Y E. ARATS!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEY, HEY! LOOKS LIKE *SUPERNATURAL* IS THE ORDER OF THE DAY, FRIENDS! I.E., TOLD YOU A *WEREWOLF* STORY, SO I'LL TELL YOU ONE ABOUT *KAMPYRES*! WELCOME TO THE *VAULT OF HORROR*! THIS IS YOUR *FACE-KEEPEE* SHINING! I CALL THIS BLOOD-CURDLING TALE FROM MY BLOODY COLLECTION

## MIDNIGHT MESS!



THE CLOCK IN THE STEEPLE OF THE VILLAGE HALL CHIMED FIVE AS HAROLD HADISON MOVED ACROSS THE SQUARE FROM THE RAILROAD STATION. IN THE DISTANCE, THE TRAIN WHISTLED OFF INTO THE GATHERING TWILIGHT. HAROLD RACED UP THE CLOCK TOWER STILL ECHOING THE LAST DRINK, LOOKED AROUND AT THE QUIANT BUILDINGS LINED THE SQUARE, AND CHUCKLED.



HEH! THIS IS JUST THE KIND OF TOWN MY SISTER WOULD BE HAPPY IN! WHAT A DEAD-LOOKING PLACE!



THE VILLAGE SQUARE WAS STRANGELY DESERTED. HAROLD SET DOWN HIS VALISE AND SCRATCHED HIS HEAD...



A NERVOUS LOOKING OLD MAN CAME OUT OF ONE OF THE SMALL STORES, LOOKED THE DOOR, AND HURRIED ACROSS THE SQUARE TOWARD HAROLD. HE KEPT LOOKING AROUND AS IF HE WERE BEING FOLLOWED-HAROLD CALLED TO HIM...



THE NERVOUS OLD MAN TROTTED ON PAST HAROLD, NOT EVEN STOPPING FOR AN INSTANT.



THEN THE OLD MAN WAS GONE, UP A NARROW ALLEY! HAROLD LAUGHED AND CONTINUED ON ACROSS THE SQUARE. A SIGN CAUGHT HIS EYE...



THE RESTAURANT WAS SMALL, BUT THE MIRRORRED WALL AT THE FAR END MADE IT APPEAR MUCH LARGER THAN IT ACTUALLY WAS, EXCEPT FOR ONE OR TWO PEOPLE WHO WERE FINISHING THEIR MEALS, THE PLACE WAS EMPTY. A WAITER CAME FORWARD...



THE WAITER SHOOK HIS HEAD  
WE CLOSE IN ORDER  
THAT OUR HELP MAY  
GET HOME BEFORE  
SUNDOWN, SIR? THE  
VAMPIRES, YOU KNOW?



VAMPIRES? WHAT  
VAMPIRES?

FOR A MOMENT THE WAITER  
STARED AT HAROLD, THEN HIS  
EYES FELL TO HIS SUITCASE...  
OH! YOU'RE A  
STRANGER  
HERE! THEN  
YOU DO NOT  
KNOW WHAT IS  
HAPPENING!



HIS? DON'T!  
WHAT'S THIS ALL  
ABOUT?

THERE HAVE BEEN SEVENTEEN  
CASES SO FAR. BODIES FOUND  
WITH EVERY DROP OF BLOOD  
DRAINED OUT OF  
THEM. THE WHOLE TOWN  
IS IN THE GRIP OF FEAR.  
IT'S THE WORK OF  
VAMPIRES!



HAH!  
NO SUCH  
THING!

EVERYTHELESS, I SUGGEST  
THAT YOU GET TO WHERE  
YOU'RE GOING BEFORE  
IT BECOMES DARK AND  
THE VAMPIRES BEGIN  
TO ROAM THE STREETS  
LOOKING FOR A VICTIM!



GRANT GRANT! I'M  
GOING! WHERE'S LIZZIE  
SUNNY STREET?  
CAN YOU TELL ME  
THAT?

OF COURSE! WEST...TWO BLOCKS!  
THEN EAST...THREE! GOOD-NIGHT!



GOOD-NIGHT!  
EVERYBODY IS EVERY-  
BODY IN THIS  
WRECKED! VAM-  
PIRES! HMM!

HAROLD STALKED THROUGH THE TOWN TOWARD HIS  
SISTER'S HOUSE! AS HE WENT, HE COULD HEAR DOORS  
BEING LOCKED AND BOLTED, BURNS BEING CHAINED,  
FINALLY...



YES! WHO'S  
OUT THERE?

SUNDOWN! IT'S ME!  
HAROLD! YOUR BROTHER!

HAROLD'S SISTER THREW OPEN THE DOOR...



HAROLD! YOU...YOU  
WEREN'T OUT THERE...  
IN THE DARK!

OH, NOT DOROTHY! I CAN'T  
TELL ME YOU BELIEVE IN  
THIS VAMPIRE BUSINESS,  
FOOT!

DONNA LOOKED AND BOLTED THE DOOR BEHIND HAROLD, AND TURNED TO FACE HIM, HER EYES WIDE IN TERROR.

OF COURSE I BELIEVE IN THE VAMPIRES! SEVENTEEN VILLAGERS HUNGRED ALREADY! BLOOD-SPAINED! WHAT ELSE COULD HAVE DONE IT...?

DONNA! THERE'RE NO SUCH THINGS, ADVANTAGES! THEY'RE MYTHS...



PERHAPS... PERHAPS THERE'S A HORRIFICAL MURDER LOOSE IN THIS TOWN? CERTAINLY THERE MUST BE A LOGICAL EXPLANATION! BUT NOT VAMPIRES, IT'S HAROLD LOUIS!

ALL RIGHT, HAROLD! BELIEVE WHAT YOU WANT TO BELIEVE! NOW LET'S FORGET ABOUT IT! COME INSIDE! TELL ME WHY THE DOORPANE RUFF?



WELL? WAS ON MY WAY TO THE DOOR! AND I THOUGHT IT DROOP IN ON YOU...

IT'S GOOD TO SEE YOU, HAROLD! YOU'RE LOOKING WELL!

THAT NIGHT, HAROLD MADISON COULD NOT SLEEP! HE TOUNG AND TURNED ON THE GO! DONNA HAD SET UP FOR HIM. FINALLY HE GOT UP AND DRESSED...

GUESS I'LL GO FOR A WALK!



OUT INTO THE DESERTED STREETS, HAROLD MOVED... DOWN SILENT DARK SIDEWALKS... TOWARD THE VILLAGE SQUARE...

WARMER! WARMER!



EVERY DOOR, EVERY WINDOW THAT HAROLD PASSED WAS LOOKED UP TIGHT AND DARK! THE VILLAGE SQUARE WAS EMPTY AND SILENT...

NOT A POKE OUT! THEY SURE HOLL THIS TOWN UP TIGHTER'N A DRUM AFTER DARK!



AND THEN HE HEARD IT... THE LAUGHTER AND THE GAY CHATTER, IT CAME FROM A FAMILIAR BUILDING...

WELL, I'LL BE!... THE RESTAURANT I WAS IN THIS AFTERNOON! IT'S OPEN! THERE'RE PEOPLE GOING IN!



THE RESTAURANT WAS ALL LIT UP. PEOPLE SAT AT TABLES, TALKING AND EATING. HAROLD WENT IN...



THAT'S WHY I COULDN'T SLEEP! I WAS HUNGRY! GUESS I'LL HAVE SOMETHING TO EAT!

HAROLD SAT DOWN AT A TABLE! HE LOOKED AROUND AT THE PEOPLE SEATED NEAR HIM, A WAITER APPROACHED! A DIFFERENT ONE FROM THE ONE HE'D SPOKE TO EARLIER...



CERTAINLY ARE SOME QUERK LOOKING CHARACTERS OUT THE TIME OF NIGHT?

WILL YOU HAVE THE DINNER, SIR... OR WOULD YOU...

THE WAITER LOOKED AT HAROLD WITH DARK PIERCING EYES... HAROLD SMILED UNCOMFORTABLY...



OK, SIR... THE DINNER WILL BE ROAST WITH FINE? OR... WHAT'S THE MEAT TONIGHT?

JAUSE... BOOP... ROAST WITH PRINCE-FRIED COFFEE... SHEPHERD...

HAROLD LICKED HIS LIPS...



GOOD? SAY I AM HUNGRY? HEH, HEH?

I'LL BE RIGHT BACK!

THE WAITER WENT AWAY AND CAME BACK WITH A GLASS OF JUICE...



AM I TOMATO JUICE?

VERY FUNNY!

HAROLD SIPPED THE CHILLED JUICE IN THE GLASS. IT TASTED SALTIER THAN USUAL... AND THINNER...



UM? OH, WELL! CAN'T EXPECT MUCH IN A SMALL-TOWN RESTAURANT! THE WAITER'S LOOKING AT ME! I'D BETTER FINISH IT!

THE SOUP WAS HOT... BUT IT TOO WAS SALTIER THAN HAROLD WOULD'VE LIKED.



STRANGEST TASTING BOUILLION I'VE EVER HAD! RICHER THAN USUAL TOO...

DO YOU LIKE YOUR ROAST CLOVE, WELL-DONE OR MEDIUM...







IN THE OLD DAYS, HUMANS HUNTED THEIR OWN FOOD... PREPARED IT THEMSELVES! HARBORED FOOD IN THE LEGS... HUNTED THEIR OWN INSTINCT! BUT NOW, WE, JUST LIKE MODERN MAN, LEAVE THE HUNTING TO THE PROFESSIONALS! WE LEAVE THE PREPARING TO THE PROFESSIONALS, TOO...

YOU MEAN...



THIS RESTAURANT SERVES BLOOD DISHES... LIKE A VEGETARIAN RESTAURANT SERVES VEGETABLE DISHES. BLOOD-JUICE-COCKTAIL... HOT BLOOD-CONSCIENCE... ROAST BLOOD-CLOTS... FRENCH-FRIED BONES... BLOOD SHERRET...

OHNO...



I'M SCARY, HAROLD! LIKE THE OTHER SEVENTEEN THAT HUNDERED INTO THIS RESTAURANT, YOU WILL HAVE TO BE SILENCED! I CANNOT SAVE YOU!

THE TAP! BRING THE TAP!



HAROLD WAS LIFTED ROBBILY BY THE GRABBLING CROWD OF VAMPIRES WHILE HIS SISTER LOOKED ON UNCONCERNEDLY. ONE VAMPIRE BROUGHT A ROPE! ANOTHER... THE TAP...

TIE UP HIS FEET!

STRUNG HIM UP!

A PARTY!



AND SO HAROLD WAS STRUNG UP... HEAD DOWN! THE TAP WAS INSERTED INTO HIS JUGULAR VEIN! AND EACH OF THE VAMPIRES CAME, ONE BY ONE, AND FILLED ITS GLASS...

NOTHIN' LIKE THE REAL STUFF!

I'LL TRY...



RICH, RICH! AND THAT'S THE STORY, KIDDIES! THAT'S WHAT "UNHOLY" VAMPIRES DO THESE DAYS! THEY DINE IN BLOODTARIAN RESTAURANTS, OVER BUNDOON TO BUNNYE WHERE THERE'S ONE IN FOUR TOWN. YOU ASK? WELL, SOME ASK! IF YOU FEEL UP TO IT, LOOK FOR IT! YOU CAN TELL IT BY THE EYES INSIDE! IT'S IN RED... AND IT SAYS "FOURTEEN" NO VAMPIRE THE BATTERED!" THE BOY WHO STARTED THIS CHAIN OF DRINKERIES IS A VAMPIRE BURNING!

HE KNOWS THERE'S A "BURNER" SOME EVERY MINUTE! NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER! 'BYE!

HERE'S A YARN THAT FIGURES  
TO END UP PRETTY HORRIBLE...

# BUSTED MARRIAGE!



JEFFREY HORN WAS A DESPERATE MAN. HE WANTED MONEY. HE WANTED THE COMFORTS MONEY COULD BRING HIM. AND LOUISE BRITTLING WAS RICH... VERY RICH, SO HE SWALLOWED HIS PRIDE... AND PROPOSED...

YOU'RE... VERY RICH, JEFFREY... BUT I DON'T LOVE YOU...! Besides... I'M TEN YEARS OLDER THAN YOU!

LOUISE! AGE DOESN'T MATTER. I LOVE YOU, THAT'S WHAT'S IMPORTANT! I WISH YOU COULD FIND IT IN YOUR HEART TO LOVE ME!

I... I...

BUT JEFFREY HORN WAS NOT ONE TO GIVE UP EASILY. HE'D HEARD ABOUT THE LITTLE SHOP DOWNTOWN WITH THE STRANGE NATIVE PROPRIETOR...

I FOLLOWED HER WHEREVER SHE WENT. I PICKED UP THESE HAIR CLIPPINGS AND NAIL CLIPPINGS IN HER BEAUTY PARLOR! YOU SAID YOU'D HEED THEM...

GOOD! GOOD! NOW! YOU SAY YOU WANT TO MARRY ME...!



YES! I WANT HER TO CONSENT TO BE MY WIFE! I WANT US TO BE MARRIED.

LEAVE ME CLIPPING FROM YOUR HAN AND NAILS. AND COME BACK TOMORROW! I WILL BE READY!

THE NEXT DAY... WHY THERE ARE NOTHING MORE THAN DOLLAR DOLLARS THE KIND ONE SEES ON WEDDING CARDS.

NOT QUITE, MR. MORN! THERE ARE HOODOO DOLLARS! THE BRIDE REPRESENTS MISS BRITTLING...

AND THE GROOM REPRESENTS YOU TAKE THEM HOME! PUT THEM SOME-PLACE SAFE FROM HARM. WHATEVER HAPPENS TO THESE DOLLARS, HAPPENS TO THE PERSON THEY REPRESENT!

I... I SEE! AND SINCE THEY ARE GETTING MARRIED, LOUISE AND I WILL BE MARRIED!



EXACTLY! AND WHY I SUGGEST THAT YOU MAKE THESE DOLLARS PLACED ON FOUR OWN WEDDING CARDS. SUCH ARTICLES ARE HIGHLY TREASURED. IT WILL INSURE THEIR SAFETY...

YOU... YOU HEAR THAT IF ANYTHING SHOULD HAPPEN TO THESE DOLLARS, AN ARM BREAK OFF... OR A LEG... THAT THE SAME THING WILL HAPPEN TO THE PERSON...

IT IS THE HOODOO SPELL! YOU MUST TAKE THE DOLLARS WITH THE HOODOO THAT IS WHY I SUGGESTED USING THEM ON YOUR CARDS. AFTER THE WEDDING, PUT THEM UNDER GLASS, AND GUARD THEM WELL! ON, BE CAREFUL NOT TO CUT OFF THE SUPPLY OF AIR ON YOU AND YOUR FUTURE WIFE MAY SUFFOCATE!

I'LL... BE CAREFUL! THANK YOU! THANK YOU FOR YOUR HELP!



IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE LOUISE BRITTLING'S ATTENTION TOWARD JEFFREY BEGAN TO CHANGE, UNTIL...

OH, DARLING! AT FIRST I THOUGHT YOU WERE MERELY IN LOVE WITH MY MONEY... BUT NOW I KNOW YOU LOVE ME FOR MYSELF! YES, YES... I'LL MARRY YOU!

LOUISE! LOUISE... AT LAST...

AND SO THEY WERE MARRIED! AND THE FIGURES STOOD UPON THE LATTER WEDDING CASE... AND...

JEFFREY! I'M SO HAPPY I LIKE THOSE FIGURES... ON OUR CAKE!

LET'S SAVE THOSE FIGURES, HONEY, FOR ALWAYS! THEY WILL BE A SYMBOL OF OUR HAPPINESS.



SO WITH BLISS LIKE THAT, JEFFREY MANAGED TO HAVE THE VOODOO FIGURES PLACED IN A LOCKED CHINA CLOSET UNDER A GLASS BELL IN LOUISE'S PALATIAL HOME...

THERE! AND EVERY TIME WE HAVE A SPAT ON A MISUNDERSTANDING, THESE FIGURES WILL REMIND US OF HOW HAPPY WE WERE AT THIS MOMENT!

OPEN THE WINDOW, JEFF! IT'S SO HOT IN HERE...



JEFFREY LAUGHED AND SHOT A TROUBLED GLANCE AT THE FIGURES INSIDE THE CHINA CLOSET...

HEH! IT'S ONLY WARM FOR NOW BRIDES, MONEY! GO ON OUTSTAYS! I'LL BE IN IN A MINUTE!

ALL RIGHT, JEFF! BUT DON'T BE LONG, WILL YOU? WHEN IT'S awfully stuffy in here!



HE WATCHED AS LOUISE LAUGHED UP OF THE MARBLE STAIRCASE... AT SOON AS SHE DROVE INTO HER ROOM, JEFFREY UNLOCKED THE CHINA CLOSET, GASPING FOR BREATH...

THAT WAS STUPID OF ME! I FORGOT ABOUT CUTTING OFF THE AIR SUPPLY! TOMORROW I'LL HAVE TO GET A BELL WITH HOLES IN IT! MEANTIME...



JEFF SLIPPED A MATCH STICK UNDER THE EDGE OF THE BELL...

MEANTIME, I'LL PROP IT UP SO AIR CAN GET IN!



THEN HE LOOKED THE CHINA CLOSET AND FROGGETED THE KEY. HE WENT OUTSIDE, LOUISE SAT ON THE BED SMILING AT HIM...

THAT'S BETTER! WHAT WAS IT?

OH... SOME DAMN POOL HAD FOUNDED UP THE THERMOSTAT!



AND SO, WITH THE AID OF VOODOO... JEFF HAD GOTTEN WHAT HE WANTED! HE'D MARRIED LOUISE WHITTLING... AND HER BILLIONS, THE NEXT DAY HE PURCHASED A NEW GLASS BELL... HAD TINY HOLES CHILLED IN IT... AND SUBSTITUTED IT IN THE CHINA CLOSET. ALL WENT WELL FOR A YEAR OR THEREAFTER...

LOUISE, I WISH YOU WOULDN'T DRAG ME TO THESE PARTIES! YOU KNOW HOW I...

WOW! SOMEONE'S COMING!

LOUISE? WHY, YOU GAVE!



... AND THIS MUST BE YOUR NEW MARRIAGE! WELL, INTRODUCTION BE...

JEFF! THIS IS EVE PORTER! EVE'S BEEN IN EUROPE FOR TWO YEARS...

GLAD TO MEET YOU, EVE!



EVE PORTER WAS YOUNG AND LOVELY, SHE WAS ATTRACTED TO JEFF! THAT EVENING, AS THEY DANCED...

TOO BAD I DON'T MEET YOU BEFORE LADDER DID, JEFF! YOU'RE QUITE A DUTY!



PERRAPS... PERRAPS WE CAN HAVE DINNER TOGETHER SOMETIME, EVE!

AND SO, EVE AND JEFF BEGAN SEEING EACH OTHER SECRETLY! THEIR ATTRACTION FOR EACH OTHER GREW STRONGER EACH TIME THEY MET. IT WASN'T LONG BEFORE THEY REALIZED THAT THEY WERE FALLING IN LOVE...

DIVORCE LOUISE, DARLING! MARRY ME! WE'LL GET ALONG SOMEHOW! I HAVE A SMALL INCOME!



I... I LOVE YOU EVE - BUT THERE'S ANOTHER WAY! A BETTER WAY!

IT WAS LOUISE'S WEALTH THAT JEFF WAS THINKING OF, HE HATED TO GIVE THAT UP, AND THERE WAS A WAY... ONE WAY TO HAVE BOTH... BOTH LOUISE'S MONEY... AND EVE... SO...

WHAT ARE YOU DOING, JEFF? I'M PUTTING THESE WEDDING CAKE PUMPS UNDER SEPARATE GLASS BELLS. LOUISE'S THOUGHT THEY'D LOOK BETTER THAT WAY...



WHAT JEFF WAS DOING WAS TAKING THE OLD GLASS BELL, THE ONE WITHOUT ANY HOLES AND PLACING IT OVER LOUISE'S FIGURE. HE PUT HIS OWN UNDER THE ONE WITH THE VENTILATION! LATER THAT NIGHT...

GASP... JEFF? GASP! I... I CAN'T BREATHE!



WHAT IS IT, LEANSE? WHAT'S WRONG? SHALL I CALL A DOCTOR?

IT WAS SO SIMPLE! LOUISE'S BREATHING BECAME MORE AND MORE LABORED! THE DOCTOR CAME, HE COULDN'T UNDERSTAND IT.

IT'S AS IF SHE WAS SOMETHING WERE SUFFOCATING! DOCTOR! DO SOMETHING! IT MUST BE HER HEART!



BUT JEFF KNEW THAT NOTHING COULD BE DONE FOR LOUISE. IN THE CHINA CLOSET, THE LAST TRACE OF AIR INSIDE THE BELL ROUSING LOUISE'S VOODOO FIGURE VANISHED, AND...

SH- SHE'S DEAD, JEFF! I'M SORRY... YOU... YOU DID ALL YOU COULD, DIDN'T YOU? IT WASN'T YOUR FAULT!



AND NOW JEFF WAS FREE! FREE TO MARRY EVE! AND LOUISE'S MONEY WAS ALL HIS...

AGRED TO AGREE... DUST TO DUST...



AFTER THE FUNERAL, JEFF WANTED TO DESTROY LOUISE'S IMAGE... BUT HE RECONSIDERED...

I STILL HAVE TO PRESERVE MY FIGURINE! I'VE GOT TO MAKE SURE MINE IS KEPT FROM HARM! THERE'S ONLY ONE WAY...



AND SO...

WHAT IF IT, JEFF? WHAT'S THE SURPRISE?

LOOK?



EVE HAD NEVER SEEN THE FIGURINE IN LOUISE'S CHINA CLOSET! SO IT WAS EASY TO POOL HER...

I BOUGHT THEM FOR OUR WEDDING CAKE! OH, JEFF... HOW SWEET!



LOUISE'S FIGURE STOOD IN HER AIR-TIGHT GLASS BELL...

AFTER THE WEDDING WE'LL KEEP THEM ALWAYS, AS A REMIND OF OUR LOVE... UNDER THESE GLASS BELLS...

OH, JEFF, DARLING! WHAT A FINE THOUGHT! OF COURSE...



EVERYTHING WAS PERFECT. WHEN THE PROPER TIME HAD ELAPSED AND THE WEDDING DAY WAS SET, JEFF REMOVED THE TWO FIGURINES FROM THE CHINA CLOSET... AND...

...FOR THE TOP OF THE WEDDING CAKE, PERHAPS! JUST ONE THING! BE VERY CAREFUL WITH THEM! UNDERSTAND...?

OH... OH, WHEN NOW, I WILL BE EXTRA CAREFUL!



BUT WHEN THE AIR HIT THE FIGURE OF LOUISE, SOMETHING STRANGE BEGAN TO TAKE PLACE. AFTER ALL... LOUISE HAD BEEN DEAD FOR A LONG TIME...

AREN'T SOMETIME SHELLS IN HIS BAKERY, PIERRE...

IT SEE THESE FIGURE... ON DE CAKE! BUT WHAT CAN I DO? M'SIEU HORN INSISTED...



AND AT THE WEDDING RECEPTION...

OH, JEFF! LOOK! THE BRIDE'S FIGURE ON THE CAKE! IT'S ALL MOULTY AND ROTTER...

GHOST...



AFTER THE WEDDING...

THROW THEM AWAY, JEFF! THE BRIDE IS POTRIFIED! IT SMELLS LIKE A GRAVE!



LET ME SAVE THE GROOM'S FIGURINE, EVE! I'LL HAVE PIERCE MAKE US ANOTHER BRIDE!

JEFF PLACED THE VENTILATED GLASS BELL OVER THE GROOM FIGURINE...

ALL RIGHT NOW... COME TO BED, HONEY

NOON AS I THROW THIS AWAY!



JEFF DROPPED THE POOL-SHALLING FIGURINE OF LOUISE INTO THE GARBAGE CAN, AND WENT TO BED.

OH, JEFF! AT LAST, MARRIED?

EVE... BARE...



DOWNSTAIRS, IN THE GARBAGE CAN... THE ROTTING FIGURINE OF LOUISE STIRRED... MOVED? IT CLIMBED FROM THE LITTER-FILLED CAN...



...STUMBLED ACROSS THE KITCHEN AND INTO THE DINING ROOM WHERE JEFF'S FIGURINE STOOD UNDER THE GLASS...



...CLIMBED TO THE TABLE AND PUSHED...



UPSTAIRS, IN THE BEDROOM, THE LIGHT HAD JUST GONE OUT! SUDDENLY, EVE SCREAMED



HIS HYSTERICAL SHRIERS ECHOED THROUGH THE HOUSE, DOWN INTO THE DINING-ROOM WHERE JEFF'S VOODOO FIGURE LAY SMASHED INTO A HUNDRED JAGGED PIECES



THEN, HOW SO EVE'S NEW BRIDE-GROOM JUST FELL APART... AND ON THEIR WEDDING NIGHT FOR, TONIGHT WELL, IT JUST GOES TO SHOW YOU! A MODERN MARRIAGE CAN'T LAST IF IT DOESN'T BEGIN SOLIDLY! AND AT LEAST EVE FORGOT BUT THAT JEFF WAS JUST A CROWD-IN TIME! NOW THE OLD



WITCH IS STIRRING UP HER FEM-ROT, READY TO GIB OUT ANOTHER HORROR HELPING TO HOLD YOUR NOSE... EYES RIGHT!

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

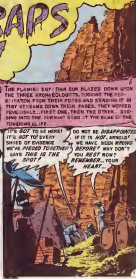
HEL, HEL! SO IT'S **SUPERNATURAL** YOU WANT, EH? WELL... YOU'VE HAD A **WOLF** STORY... A **VAMPIRE** STORY... AND A **POODLE** STORY! NOW LET'S SEE! AH! I'VE GOT THE **RECIPES**! (CHOKES!) I'LL COOK UP A **WITCH** STORY IN MY **CRUDDY CAULDRON**! YEP! IT'S YOUR **SNAKERS**— **GHEP**, THE **OLD WITCH**, READY TO DISH OUT HER TASTY TALE OF TERROR FOR THIS ISSUE OF C.K.'S MAG! SO CRANK UP TO THE **JUBBLING POT**... TUCK YOUR SHROUDES UNDER YOUR GIRNS... FASTER YOUR **SHOOL CUPS**... AND **FEAR** ON THE **POOL PARE**! I CALL...

## THIS WRAPS IT UP!

THE **FLAMING** SUN! (THE SUN BLAZED DOWN UPON THE THREE **ARCHAEOLOGISTS**, BURNING THE PER-  
SIFICATION FROM THEIR PORNS AND BURNING IT IN  
TINY STREAMS DOWN THEIR FACES. THEY WORKED  
PENICILLIN... FIRST ONE, THEN THE OTHER... DIS-  
SOLVING INTO THE **SUNNY** SAND AT THE BASE OF THE  
TOWERING CLIFF...

IT'S **NOT** TO BE HERE!  
IT'S **NOT** TO BE EVERY  
SHADE OF EVIDENCE  
WE'VE **PRICED** TOGETHER!  
SAYS THIS IS THE  
SPOT!

DO NOT BE **DISAPPOINTED**  
IF IT IS **NOT**, **MR. GLOD**!  
WE HAVE **NOON** **WRONG**  
**BEFORE**! WHY DON'T  
YOU **REST** **WENT**?  
**REMEMBER**... YOUR  
**HEART**...





DOCTOR PHOEBE HUNTER SAT DOWN AND WIPE HIS SOAKING WET FACE WITH HIS HANDKERCHIEF. HE STARED HIS TWO ASSOCIATES... PROFESSOR THOMAS STEEL AND DOCTOR JEROME GRABEL... AS THEY CONTINUED DIGGING.

HERE WE ARE... ON THE VERGE OF THE MOST VALUABLE APOCALYPTIC FIND OF THE CENTURY. AND WE HAVE TO WATCH MY HEART!

YOU WERE ADVISED NOT EVEN TO GO ALONE ON THIS EXPEDITION, ARNOLD. NO LESS DID LIKE THAT!

HAH! I'M AS HEALTHY AS A TWENTY-YEAR-OLD! JUST BECAUSE I HAD A SLIGHT HEART ATTACK...

ANOTHER HEART ATTACK COULD BE FATAL, ARNOLD! GET THAT THROUGH YOUR STUPIDLY THICK SKULL!

TOM, ARNOLD LOOK...



DOCTOR JEROME GRABEL POINTED AT THE SPOT WHERE THEY'D BEEN DIGGING.

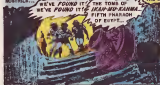
AT THE BOTTOM OF THE EXCAVATION WAS A ROUND HOLE, PARTIALLY UNCOVERED SLAB OF STONE...

SOON, THE STONE BLOCK HAD BEEN FULLY CLEARED OF SAND. AS ARNOLD ANTICIPATINGLY WATCHED, THOMAS AND JEROME TURNED BY IT.



FINALLY, THE LARGE STONE SLAB WAS MOVED AWAY, REVEALING A DARK OPENING WITH DUSTY STEPS DESCENDING INTO THE BLACKNESS. THE MUSTY ODOR OF DUSTY AND ROT, OF THINGS LONG BURIED AND AIR THREE THOUSAND YEARS OLD, BEARDED THEM NOSTRILS...

FOOTSTEPS ECHOED INTO THE SHADOWY BLACKNESS, SHATTERING THE SILENCE OF CENTURIES. FLICKERING LIGHT FROM THE LANTERN THOMAS CARRIED LANCED WALLS THAT HAD NOT FELT LIGHT FOR OVER A HUNDRED GENERATIONS. THE THREE MEN DESCENDED INTO THE SHAFT...



WE'VE FOUND IT! THE TOMB OF HEM-HE-KANNA, FIFTH PHARAOH OF EGYPT...

I'VE COUNTED FIFTY-FIVE STEPS ALREADY!

WE'RE NEARING THE BOTTOM.

THE STEPS ENDED BEFORE A SMALL DOOR. ITS SURFACE WAS EXQUISITELY DECORATED WITH TYPICAL EXAMPLES OF ANCIENT EGYPTIAN ARTISTRY. OVER THE DOOR WAS A TABLET INSCRIBED WITH HEBD-GLATPHICE.



WHAT DOES IT SAY, THOMAS? YOU'RE THE HEBDGLATPHICE EXPERT.

IT SAYS, "BEYOND THIS DOOR LIES EXALTED NEAN-MU-KAMMA, FIFTH PHARAOH OF ALL EGYPT. LET THIS BE A WARNING TO ALL WHO TRESPASS. DEATH WILL COME TO THOSE WHO ENTER HIS TOMB. NEAN-MU-KAMMA WILL RISE TO AVENGE THE DISTURBANCE OF ITS SANCTITY."

JEROME'S LAUGHTER WAS THIN AND FUNNED WITH NERVOUSNESS. IT SUPPLED THROUGH THE SILENCE AND ECHOED UP THE STAIRS OF THE SHAFT.

YEN, HERE! TYPICAL OF THE WARNINGS PLACED AT THE ENTRANCES TO OTHER PHARAOH'S TOMBS...

THEY WERE SUPPOSED TO SCARE OFF WANDERING BANDS OF THIEVES WHO MIGHT HAVE SNEAKED INTO THE TOMBS AND STOLEN THE TREASURES BURIED WITH THE PHARAOHS...



ARNOLD TRIED TO PUSH THE DOOR OPEN.

IT'S SEALED! WE'LL HAVE TO SMASH IT! LEAVE A HAND HERE, JEROME! STEP AWAY, ARNOLD!

FLIPPING THEIR FULL WEIGHT AGAINST THE SEALED TOMB-ENTRANCE DOOR, DOCTOR GRABEL AND PROFESSOR STEEL FINALLY MANAGED TO BREAK IT DOWN...



BASH!

LOOK FOR THE FLOOR!

SKELETONS!

THE WHITENED BONES GRINNED UP AT THEM AS IF THEY SOON ENJOYED A SECRET THEY WOULD NOT SHARE.



PERHAPS THESE ARE THE REMAINS OF THIEVES WHO ONCE BROKE IN.

IMPOSSIBLE! THE DOOR WAS SEALED!

THEN WHO ARE THEY? WORKMEN PERHAPS? SERVANTS...WHO INTERFERED NEAN-MU-KAMMA AND THEN WERE MURDERED SO THAT THE SECRET OF THE TOMB'S LOCATION WOULD BE KEPT.



THOMAS DARTED FORWARD. JEWELS! JEWELS! GEMS! ARNOLD, JEROME... COME...SEE... A LORD'S FORTUNE IN PRECIOUS STONES!



PROFESSOR THOMAS STEEL SCOPED UP HANDFULS OF THE SPARKLING GEMS HURRILY...

ROUBIES? EMERALDS? SAPPHIRES? MILLIONS OF DOLLARS WORTH!

AND THE URNS THAT HOLD THEM ARE SOLID GOLD!

THIS IS THE GREATEST ARCHAEOLOGICAL DISCOVERY OF THE TWENTIETH CENTURY! I SAID IT WOULD SET

THE HEART! TAKE IT EASY, ARNOLD! DON'T EXCITE YOURSELF! REMEMBER... YOUR HEART!

HERE! IN HERE! IT'S THE BURIAL CHAMBER!



THE BARS OPENED OF DEAN-MU-KARMA!

THOMAS! HELP ME LIFT THE LID!

GET THAT END, JEROME!

THE LID OF THE CIRCOPHAROUS WAS REMOVED, REVEALING THE MUMMY OF DEAN-MU-KARMA.



THOMAS STARED AT ARNOLD. BUT... BUT IF WE REPORT THAT WE'VE FOUND THE TOMB... WE'LL HAVE TO TURN THE TREASURE OVER TO THEM.

WELL, OF COURSE, THOMAS! IT BELONGS TO THEM...

THOMAS! I'M ASHAMED OF YOU! OF COURSE THE TREASURE BELONGS TO THE MURRIAN.

JEROME TOOK THOMAS BY THE ARM AND JERRED HIM INTO A CORNER.

WHY DO YOU FOOL? CAN'T YOU SEE A KIDNAP TOO RIGHTER TO CLAIM THE TREASURE FOR HIMSELF?

THEN WE'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HIM! HE STANDS IN OUR WAY...





LATER THAT NIGHT, IN THE CAMP OF THE THREE  
 ARCHAEOLOGISTS NEAR THE ENTRANCE TO THE TOMB...  
 IS HE  
 ASLEEP?  
 YES! NOW THIS IS WHAT YOU DO! GO  
 DOWN INTO THE TOMB! UNWRAP THE  
 MUMMY OF TEAH-NU-KAHMA AND WRAP  
 YOURSELF IN ITS WRINDINGS...



THEN SHOUT OR SCREAM! I'LL AWAKEN  
 ARNOLD AND TELL HIM THAT YOU MUST BE  
 DOWN THERE! WHEN WE REACH THE BURIAL  
 CHAMBER, YOU GO INTO A MUMMY ADT.  
 AND I'LL START SHOUTING ABOUT  
 THE CURSE...  
 I GET  
 MY HUN  
 READY?  
 HE'LL  
 DROP  
 DEAD OF  
 FRIGHT!



CRASH! AND WHEN  
 WE BRING HIS BODY  
 BACK TO CAMP, HE'LL  
 CLAIM HE HAD A  
 HEART ATTACK  
 FROM DISAPPOINTMENT  
 OVER THE FAILURE  
 OF OUR EX-EDITION!



ALL RIGHT! GO  
 AHEAD! AND HURRY!  
 WAIT FOR  
 MY SHOUT!



THOMAS WENT DOWN INTO THE  
 TOMB! JEROME SAT IN HIS COAT FOR  
 A LONG TIME... GROWING MORE AND  
 MORE UNRESTY FINALLY...

**YAAAAAARRRR**

SHUP?  
 WHAT'S  
 THAT?



ARNOLD SAT BOLT UPRIGHT ON HIS COAT! JEROME  
 LEAPED TO HIS FEET! THOMAS'S BLOOD-CURLING  
 SCREAM CAME AGAIN...

IT'S THOMAS! HIS BED'S  
 EMPTY! HE MUST BE DOWN  
 THERE... IN THE TOMB!

LET'S GO...



ARNOLD STARTED DOWN THE TOMB STEPS... JEROME  
 FOLLOWING, SMILING...

HE MUST BE IN  
 TROUBLE!

HURRY, ARNOLD!  
 HURRY!

SUDDENLY, THEY REACHED THE TREASURE CHAMBER. THOMAS'S LAMP SHOT UPON THE FLOOR ILLUMINATING THE ENTIRE ROOM. BEYOND WAS THE EGYPTIAN CHAMBER. ARNOLD STOPPED.

OH, MY LORD! LOOK!

IT... IT'S THE MUMMY!



HE CAME FROM THE EGYPTIAN CHAMBER... EXAMINING ALONG... TOTTERING NEARLY... HIS WINDINGS RANGING LOOSELY JEROME HAD TO CONTROL HIMSELF TO KEEP FROM LAUGHING! THOMAS... LOOKED SO COMICAL! THEN... JEROME WENT INTO HIS ACT...

THE GURGE ARROLD! THE GURGE ON THE ENTRANCE DOOR!

DEATH WILL COME TO THOSE WHO ENTER HIS TOMB. HA-HA-HA... WELL... JEROME... RISE!



THE WRAPPED FIGURE STUMBLED FORWARD...

THE GURGE IS TRUE, ARNOLD! THE MUMMY HAS RISE!

ARNO...  
...I...  
...I...



IT WAS ALMOST UPON THEM...

ARNOLD! COME ON! LET'S RUN! RUN!

CHUCK... JEROME? MY... MY...



HEART!

ARNOLD CRUMPLED TO THE FLOOR. JEROME SWIFT TO EXAMINE HIM.

HE... HE'S DEAD!



JEROME BEGAN TO LAUGH! THE WRAPPED FIGURE STOPPED.

GOOD NIGHT, THOMAS! GOOD NIGHT! JUST ONE THING...



JEROME DREW THE PISTOL FROM UNDER HIS SHIRT...

"ONE THING YOU *DIDN'T* COUNT ON, THOMAS! YOU SEE? I WANT THAT TREASURE FOR MYSELF! THANKS FOR YOUR HELP."



JEROME FIRED AT THE SHAKING FIGURE BEFORE HIM



THE BULLET TOOK THROUG THE WRAPPINGS BUT THE FIGURE DID NOT FALL...

"FOR GOD'S SAKE! I SHOT YOU, THOMAS! DIE!"



JEROME SACKED OFF...EMPTYING HIS BUL INTO THE WINDING-ENGAGED FIGURE...



BUT THE MUMMY KEPT COMING. JEROME SACKED INTO THE BURIAL CHAMBER. THE SARCOPHAGUS WAS OPEN...



THE MAN IN THE MUMMY LIFTED UP A LOOK OF SHEER HORROR ON HIS FACE...

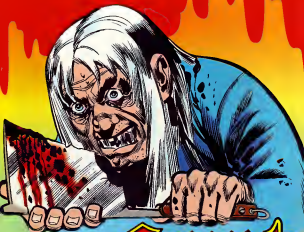
"THOMAS! THOMAS!" THEN... THEN... CHOKED!



SEE, HER I GO AGAIN! WHAT'S HIS NAME? TOOK CARE OF THE DISTURBERS OF HIS SARCOTITY AS THE CURSE HAD PREDICTED. AFTER THAT HE TOSSED THE BONES ON THE PILE WITH THE OTHER SKELETONS... YARNED... SHUT THE FRONT SLAB ONCE MORE... AND WENT BACK TO SLEEP! WHICH IS MORE THAN YOU'LL BE ABLE TO DO, NOW THAT YOU'VE FULFILLED MY... *TALK OF HORROR!* BYE, NOW!

THE MUMMY WAS RIGHT BEHIND JEROME... ALMOST... TOUCHING HIM





# The Crypt Keeper



**TERROR**



NO. 36  
JUNE-JULY



# TALES



10¢

FROM THE

# CRYPT

FEATURING



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

IN THIS ISSUE

E.C.'S ADAPTATION OF A STORY BY

**RAY BRADBURY**

AMERICA'S TOP HORROR WRITER!





# THE



## "ARTIST OF THE ISSUE"

## • GEORGE EVANS



Latest permanent addition to the E.C. family, George R. Evans was born Feb. 3, 1920, in Harwood, Pa., of English and Pennsylvania Dutch ancestry. When George was nine, his family moved to Kulpmont, Pa., a coal-mining town. George's early art training came at fifteen from a correspondence course, which he paid for by working as a store clerk, coal-trucker, and mill hand. He also attended the Scranton Art School for one year. At 16, he had already started to sell illustrations to airplane pulp magazines, supplementing his income by sign-painting. Came the war, and George spent three years in the AAF, where, by diligence, application, and K.P., he rose to the grade of Plc. Decorations: one (1) Good Conduct Medal, grudgingly awarded. While in the army, George was stationed for a spell on Long Island. He liked it so much that upon being discharged, he came back there to live with his bride, whom he'd married six months previously. After returning to civilian life, George's first job was as a staff artist for another comic publishing house. He also attended night classes at the Art Students League in N. Y. C. George, his lovely wife Evelyn, and their four-year-old daughter, Carol, are now living in a cute little ranch house in Levittown, Long Island. His hobbies include: aviation . . . especially World War I vintage, loading, sports of all kinds, loading, eating, and . . . you guessed it . . . loading! George's work . . . which has been enthusiastically received by you readers . . . appears in E.C.'s three horror mags, two war mags, and two SuspensStory mags!

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! WELCOME, BOILS AND BOWLS... WELCOME TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR. THIS IS YOUR HORROR-HOST, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, INVITING YOU IN TO HEAR ANOTHER BRISTLY SELECTION FROM MY DISGUSTING COLLECTION. PERHAPS, BEFORE I START MY CHILLING TALE, YOU MIGHT LIKE TO PLAY A LITTLE GAME WITH ME? LIKE... SAY... OLD MAID? I HAVE A REAL LIVE OLD MAID! NO? Oh... TOO BAD! THEN I'LL BEGIN THE BLOOD-CURLING TALE I CALL...

**FARE TONIGHT,  
FOLLOWED BY  
INCREASING  
CLOTTYNES...**



YOU SLAM DOWN THE TRUNK-LID OF YOUR TAXI-CAB AND LOOK AROUND. THE NIGHT IS DUMP AND A FAINT TRACE OF FOG DRIFTS IN FROM THE BAY. CHALLENGING YOU TO THE BONE, YOU STAND THERE FOR A MOMENT, SHIVERING. YOU FUMBLE IN YOUR JACKET POCKET FOR A CIGARETTE, PULL OUT A HALF-EMPTY PACK AND SHAKE ONE BETWEEN YOUR LIPS. THE FLAME OF THE MATCH, FLARING UP IN THE BLOOD, BURNS YOUR EYES, AND EVEN AFTER YOU'VE BLOWN IT OUT, ITS GLOW STILL DANCES BEFORE YOU....

HMMPH... NICE NIGHT...  
FOR A MURDER!



YOU SHUFFLE AROUND TO THE FRONT OF YOUR CAB, BRINE OPEN THE DOOR, AND SETTLE INSIDE ON THE MOST COLD LEATHER DRIVER'S SEAT. YOU SIT THERE FOR A MOMENT, SUCKING IN THE DRY SMOKE FROM YOUR BUTT AND SWALLOWING IT WHOLE INTO YOUR LUNGS. THEN YOU START THE ENGINE.

THINK I'LL CRUISE THE WEST SIDE, TONIGHT!



THE FOG HAS SETTLED ITS BLANKET OF GREY MIST UPON YOUR WINDSHIELD, SO YOU SNAP ON THE WIPERS. INDUSTRIOUS LITTLE FINGERS WHIP BACK AND FORTH, SHAVING THE WATER AWAY. YOU FEEL THROUGH THE CLEAR OPENING AT THE DISTORTED ASPHALT AHEAD THE STREETS ARE DESERTED.

"DROPPED?" NOT A DOLL. AROUND? WHAT A NIGHT TO TRY TO SCRAPE UP A FARE!



NOW IT HAS BEGUN TO RAIN, A SOFT DRIZZLE AT FIRST, THEN HEAVIER AND HEAVIER... THE WATER CAROOLING BEFORE YOU... THE INDUSTRIOUS LITTLE WIPERS SCRAMBLING MADLY BACK AND FORTH... CLEARING IT AWAY, FIRST TO ONE SIDE... THEN THE OTHER.

WELL, THAT FINISHED IT! I'LL NEVER GET A FARE, NOW.



YOU CRUISE FOR A LITTLE WHILE LONGER, RESEARCHING THE SIDEWALKS FOR A SIGNALING PASSERBY... A HOMEWARD-BOUND CUSTOMER, BUT YOU SEE NO ONE. YOU SHRUG AND PULL UP TO A DESERTED RACE STAND.

NO USE HASTING RAC. I'LL PARK HERE BY THE SUBWAY EXIT.



YOU SHUT OFF THE ENGINE AND SIT BACK, EXTRACTING ANOTHER BUTT FROM YOUR EMPTYING PACK. A ROAR BELOW TELLS YOU THAT A SUBWAY TRAIN HAS PULLED IN. A FEW SECONDS LATER, FIGURES POOR FROM THE SUBWAY EXIT...

TAXI? TAXI LADY? TAXI?



THE SUBWAY RIDERS HURRY OFF INTO THE WET SLOOM. THE NEWSIEK AT THE CORNER CALLS AFTER THEM, TRYING TO UNLOD HIS NIGHT'S PAPER ORDER.

READ ALL ABOUT IT! ANOTHER BODY FOUND! ANOTHER MURDER! READ ALL ABOUT IT!

TAXI? TAXI? TAXI?



THE PUSHING SHADOWS ARE GONE. THE NIGHT AND THE RAIN SETTLE DOWN AGAIN. YOU STARE ACROSS THE MIRRORING SIDEWALK TO THE NEWSSTAND. ANOTHER HURRY, CURIOSITY GETS THE BETTER OF YOU. YOU SNAP OPEN THE CAB-DOOR AND DART THROUGH THE RAIN TO THE PROTECTION OF THE STAND'S OVERHANG...

PAPER, MISTERY?

YEAH, THANKS!



YOU SETTLE BACK IN YOUR CAB SHOE MORE, LIGHT UP ANOTHER BUTT, AND OPEN THE PAPER. THE HEADLINES SCREAM AT YOU...

THE CORPSE OF A THIRTY YEAR OLD WOMAN WAS FOUND DRAINED OF ITS BLOOD LAST NIGHT THIS IS THE THIRTEENTH VICTIM TO DATE...



ANOTHER MURDER. FORTY-SEVEN OF THEM NOW. EACH BODY DRAINED OF ITS BLOOD. YOUR EYES SWEEP OVER THE COLUMNS OF TINY PRINT. THE DORY DETAILS, SUDDENLY, A PARAGRAPH CATCHES YOUR ATTENTION...

A SUGGESTION THAT A VAMPIRE MIGHT BE RESPONSIBLE FOR THESE MURDERS WAS OFFERED BY DR. FREDERICK MULLER, NOTED MYTHOLOGIST. POLICE HAVE REFUSED THIS POSSIBILITY.



YOU SHIVER. THE WORK OF A VAMPIRE YOU LOOK AROUND UNCOMFORTABLY, PEERING OUT AT THE DOWNGRAVE. THE RAIN POUNDS DOWN ON YOUR CAR-ROOF CHATTERING LOVELY...

A... A VAMPIRE? WHO WOULD BELIEVE IT?



THE NIGHT SWIMS IN A TORRENT BEFORE YOUR EYES. THE DARKNESS MELTS FROM THE BLACKNESS ABOVE AND SPATTERS DOWN ON THE ENGINE HOOD... CASCADES DOWN THE WINDSHIELD IN SHEETS OF DANCING LIGHTS. SUDDENLY HE IS BEHIND YOU, HIS BLACK OVERCOAT COLLAR TURNED UP, COVERING THE LOWER PART OF HIS FACE... HIS BLACK HAT-BRIM TURNED DOWN, SHIELDING THE UPPER PART. ONLY HIS EYES GLARE LIKE FIRE-LIGHTS FROM THE REVERBER OF HIS BOCKETS...



BOY?

NOBODY? NOHIN? WHERE TO?

HE MUTTERS THE STREET AND NUMBER AND SLIDES INTO THE BACK SEAT. HE CARRIES A BRIFCASE, WHICH HE HOLDS ON HIS LAP. YOU HESITATE AND PULL AWAY, CRINKLING A CUSTOMER... AT LAST, YOU GLANCE AT HIM IN THE MIRROR...

ROTTEN WEATHER, EN?

I HADN'T NOTICED!



THE ANSWER IS CURE, ALMOST INHALEING. IT IS A BRIEF ARRANGEMENT THAT HE CANS NOT TO CONVERSE. YOU SPRING AND SLIDE YOUR HEAD THROUGH THE REFLECTIONS. AND THE TORRENTS TOWARD THE ADDRESS HE'S GIVEN YOU...



ALL RIGHT, STOP HERE!

YES, SIR!

THE STREET IS IN ONE OF THE WORST NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE CITY... A NARROW, LITTER-STREWN, COBBLE-STONE ALLEY NICHED BETWEEN BAD-FACED, STAIRING TENEMENTS. YOUR PALE STEPS OUT INTO THE DOWNPOUR...

WAIT HERE FOR ME...

YES, SIR!



HE SCURRIES INTO A DARKENED HALLWAY AND DISAPPEARS INTO THE SHADOWS. YOU SHRUG, GLANCE AT THE METER, AND SETTLE BACK TO WAIT. THE RAIN IS LETTING UP NOW. THE STREET IS A BLACK MIRROR REFLECTING THE SQUALOR THAT RISES IT AT EITHER CURB. SOMETHING IN THE MIRROR CATCHES YOUR EYE...

HIS BRIEFCASE.

YOU TURN AROUND AND STARE AT THE SHINY NEW LEATHER BRIEFCASE YOUR CUSTOMER HAS LEFT ON THE BACK SEAT. THE GOLD INITIALS PULSATE IN THE LIGHT FROM THE STREET LAMP.

E.M., PH.D? E.M., PH.D? WHAT IS THERE ABOUT THOSE INITIALS?

THE NEWSPAPER ROLLED UP BESIDE YOU REMINDS YOU OF COURSE.

OF COURSE! E.M., ROBERT MULLER, THE NOTED MYTHOLOGIST... THE MAN WHO IS TRYING TO CONVINCE THE POLICE THAT THE JORDONSON IS A VAMPIRE.

YOU PULL OUT YOUR PACK OF BUTTS, FISHING FOR ANOTHER CIGARETTE. THE PACK IS EMPTY. YOU CURSE. FAR DOWN THE BLOCK, AT THE CORNER, A DIM LIGHT FILTERS THROUGH A STONE WINDOW, SILHOUETTING THE LETTERS PAINTED ON IT...

BAR? THEY'D HAVE A CIGARETTE MACHINE.

YOU SWING FROM THE CAR AND START DOWN THE LONG DARK STREET. THE RAIN HAS STOPPED. A MUDDY STREAM OF WATER RUSHES HEADLONG AT THE CURBSIDE POURING DOWN INTO A FOWL-SMELLING SEWER, PULLING THE LAST TRACES OF RAIN WITH IT. UP ABOVE, THE CLOUDS ARE BREAKING UP... AND HERE AND THERE, A STAR BLINKS THROUGH A BLACK HOLE IN THE GREY COVER...

GOING TO BE A NICE NIGHT AFTER ALL.

YOU'RE ALMOST TO THE CORNER WHEN THE LIGHTS IN THE BAR-WINDOW DISAPPEAR AND BLACKNESS DESCENDS. THE SIGN IN THE DOOR LAUGHS AT YOU, AND THE LAUGH ECHOES OVER THE SLEEK STREETS AND OFF THE GRIMING FACED OF THE TENEMENTS.

CLOSED! BLAST IT...

CLOSED

THE LAUGH DIES. SILENCE CLOSES IN, THICK, BLACK, FRIGHTENING SILENCE. STRANGE. NO RADIO PLAYING? NO BABY CRYING? NO SOUNDS OF THE PEOPLE THAT LIVE BEHIND THE WHITE TENEMENT FACADES? JUST SILENCE...

NO WONDER! THESE TENEMENTS ARE ALL BOARDED UP. THEY'RE DESERVED.

THEN WHY THE HELL? WHAT BUSINESS COULD A MAN DO IN A CONFINED TENEMENT DISTRICT? YOU START BACK TOWARD YOUR CAR, AND THEN YOU HEAR THEM... AT FIRST YOU THINK THEY'RE SCHOOLS OF YOUR OWN... BUT WHEN YOU STOP, THEY CONTINUE...

FOOTSTEPS. SOMEONE'S FOLLOWING ME.



YOU QUICKEN YOUR STEPS, THE CAR IS A MILLION MILES AWAY BEHIND YOU, THE FOOTSTEPS INCREASE THEIR TEMPO TOO. YOU BEGIN TO RUN...

THE CAR? I'LL NEVER REACH IT IN TIME.



THE OPEN HALLWAY YAWNS AT YOU. YOU DUCK IN, CRINKLING IN THE SHADOWS. A FIGURE HURRIES BY... BLACK OVERCOAT... BLACK HAT...

HIM? MY CUSTOMER? MULLER.



YOU HEAR HIS FOOTSTEPS POUNDING UP THE BLOCK. IN YOUR CHEST, YOUR HEART IS POUNDING TOO, THEN THE FOOTSTEPS STOP... AND YOUR HEART SLIPS A BEAT.

HE'S COMING BACK?



YOU BACK OFF INTO THE BLOOM. THE FOOTSTEPS APPROACH. HE STANDS FRAMED IN THE HALLWAY ENTRANCE. HIS EYES BURNING LIKE TWO WHITE-HOT COALS.

YOU CAN'T ESCAPE, MY FRIEND! YOU'RE TRAPPED!



HIS EYES SEEM TO PIERCE THE DARKNESS, SEEM TO SEARCH YOU OUT OF THE SHADOWS. CAN HE SEE YOU THERE? CAN HIS EYES PENETRATE THE NIGHT LIKE A LITE.

LIKE A BAT'S? LIKE A VAMPIRE'S?



YOU SHRIEK. YOU OPEN YOUR QUIVERING LIPS AND YOU SHRIEK. AND YOU TURN AND RUN... DOWN THE LONG BLACK CORRIDOR, STUMBLING, GETTING UP, RUNNING AGAIN.

IT'S NO USE? YOU'RE TRAPPED! I'VE CAUGHT YOU!

NO! NO!



THE CELLAR DOOR HINGS CRAZILY ON BROKEN RUSTED HINGES. STEPS LEAD DOWNWARD INTO BLACKNESS. YOU LENSE THROUGH...



THE STEPS, ROTTED AND DECAYED, GIVE WAY BENEATH YOUR WEIGHT AND YOU PLUNGE INTO THE DARKNESS...



YOU STRUGGLE TO YOUR FEET ABOVE YOU, YOUR CUSTOMER PEERS DOWN THROUGH THE CELLAR DOORWAY...



AND HIS LAUGH COMES LOUDLY THROUGH THE DAMP DARK CELLAR...

SUDDENLY THERE ARE STRANGE SOUNDS ABOUT YOU, CREAKING NOISES, AND DEEP SINGS... AND FLUTTERINGS IN THE DARK. THE CELLAR IS FILLED WITH LOW, EVIL-LOOKING BOXES, NO, NOT BOXES AT ALL...



THE LIDS HAVE COME ALIVE NOW, SLIPPING FROM THE COFFINS, SWINGING UPWARD, FALLING BACK, GHOST-FACED FIGURES, WITH SLANTED EYES AND FANGED MOUTHS OODING SPITTLE, RISE FROM THEIR DEPTHS...



THEY STUMBLE TOWARD YOU, SHRIEKING... LAUGHING... REACHING OUT...



AND THEN THEY ARE UPON YOU, THEIR FANGS RIPPING AND TEARING AT YOUR FLESH... THEIR DRY LIPS CLOSING OVER YOUR WOUNDS, DRAWING THE LIFE-FLUID THAT POURS RED FROM THEM...



AND YOU SCREAM YOU ARE HELPLESS UNDER THEIR ORLAUGHT, THERE IS NOTHING ELSE TO DO BUT SCREAM...

THE SCREAM ECHOES AND RE-ECHOES IN YOUR EARS. YOU CLAW AT THE COLD LEATHER SEAT. AND YOU OPEN YOUR EYES...

WONT WHAT... WHERE AM I?



THE RAIN CHATTERS ON YOUR CAR ROOF. PEOPLE POUR FROM THE SUBWAY EXIT. THE NEWSIE CHANTS AT THEM...

READ ALL ABOUT IT! ANOTHER BOOF FOUND! ANOTHER MURDER! READ ALL ABOUT IT!



YOU'RE BACK AT THE BACK-SEAT, BY THE SUBWAY EXIT. THE REAL-ISTIC DREAMS UPON YOU...

I... I FELL ASLEEP. I'VE BEEN DREAMING!



YOU STARE DOWN AT THE OPEN PAPER ON YOUR LAP HIS NAME SEEMS TO RISE FROM THE BLOODS OF TYPE... MANGIFIED... BLACK AND SHINING...

DR. ROBERT MULLER? WHY DID I DREAM ABOUT HIM? WHY...



AND THEN HE IS BESIDE YOU, HIS BLACK OVERCOAT PULLED UP, HIS BLACK HAT-BRIM TURNED DOWN, AND HIS EYES GLARING LIKE FIRE-LIGHTS

BOOF?

NO BOOF? HOP IN? WHERE TO?



YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK AT THE INITIALS ON THE BRIEF-CASE HE IS CARRYING. YOU KNOW WHO HE IS. HE MUTTERS THE STREET AND NUMBER AND SLIDES INTO THE BACK SEAT. YOU MESH GEARS AND PULL AWAY...

WHY DID I DREAM ABOUT HIM? AND THE VAMPIRES... ATTACKING ME? WHAT DID IT ALL MEAN?



SUREDEMLY, YOU KNOW. YOU KNOW THE MEANING OF YOUR NIGHTMARE. AND YOU KNOW WHAT YOU MUST DO...

THIS ISN'T THE WAY...

IT'S A SHORT-CUT, DOCTOR MULLER...





YOU STOP THE CAR, IT'S ONE OF THE WORST NEIGHBORHOODS IN THE CITY, THE NEIGHBORHOOD YOU DREAMED ABOUT.

YOU, YOU KNOW ME?

YES, DOCTOR! SET OUT!



IT'S CLEAR NOW, THE WHOLE DREAM IS CLEAR, OR ROBERT MULLER IS A *PHREASY* TO YOU. THAT'S WHY YOU DREAMED OF HIM FOLLOWING YOU... *TRACKING YOU DOWN*...

MY... MY BRIEFCASE! I LEFT IT ON THE SEAT!

YOU WON'T NEED IT, DOC.



AND THE *VAMPIRES*... THE ONE THAT ATTACKED YOU IN THE CELLAR. DOCTOR MULLER *KNOWS* ABOUT VAMPIRES. ALL ABOUT THEM. SOONER OR LATER HE'D CONVINCE THE POLICE.

WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME? THIS HALLWAY. IT'S SO DARK...

KEEP GOING!



IT WOULD BE HIS *WAST* KNOWLEDGE OF VAMPIRES THAT WOULD FINALLY MEAN YOUR ULTIMATE DEATH. THE DREAM MADE SENSE. THE DREAM WAS A WARNING.

WHO ARE YOU? WHO *ON* NO! NO! MY GOD!

YES, DOCTOR! YES...



HE STRUGGLES, BUT YOU ARE STRONG. YOU BEND AND BARE YOUR FANGS INTO HIS SOFT WHITE CYPOLING NECK... DRAWING IN THE THICK RED LIFE-FLUID THAT YOU MUST HAVE...



AND WHEN THE LAST DROP IS GONE, YOU FLUNG HIS LIFELESS BODY DOWN THE ROTTED CELLAR STEPS WITH THE OTHERS ONLY *THIRTEEN* VICTIMS HADN'T TILL THEY FIND THE *REST* DOWN THERE! AS DAWN BREAKS, YOU OPEN THE TRUNK OF YOUR CAR, CRAWL IN ONTO THE THIN LAYER OF SOIL AND YAWN...

IS... NO-HOW... BETTER GET A *WADD* CAT'S REST TODAY? IMAGINE... A VAMPIRE FALLING ASLEEP AT NIGHT? AND *DREAMING*, YET...



HEH, HEH, NOW *SOME* PEOPLE MIGHT ACCUSE ME OF SPINNING *WACK* FABLES, BUT YOU WOULDN'T AGREE, *WOULD* YOU, RIGH? THE ONLY THING I'M *BULLY* OF IS *TALKING* TO YOUR IMAGINATION SINCE IN A WHILE, WELL, I'VE GOT TO *METER* FRIENDS, SO I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE WALT-KEEPER FOR HIS OFFERING. WHO'S THE *FRIEND*, YOU ASK? OH, SOME *DOCTOR* I KNOW. THEY SPOTTED HIM AS A *HYCK* WHEN HE CAME TO NEW YORK. SOLD HIM THE *VAMPIRE* STATE *BOOLEYING*, ISN'T THAT A *BLOODY* SHAME? *WEE* NOW. DID YOU *LATER*?



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELCH? VENTURE INTO THE VAULT, VULTURES. THIS IS YOUR HOOF IN HOWLS, THE VAULT-KEEPER. READY TO NARRATE ANOTHER HAUNTING NOVELETTE FROM MY GRIMLY COLLECTION. SO COME IN, SIT DOWN ON THAT PILE OF SHOE-BOKS THERE, AND I'LL BEGIN THE BLOOD-CURDLING FARN I CALL...

## CURIOSITY KILLED...



THERE ISN'T MUCH TIME LEFT, HE'S RIGHT OUTSIDE THE BEDROOM DOOR. SOMEBODY ON LATER HE'LL GET IT OPEN AND I'LL... I'LL BE MURDERED. I'M SCRAMBLING THIS DOWN AS FAST AS I CAN SO YOU'LL KNOW THE WHOLE STORY. MY NAME IS HENRIETTA CLAYTON. I LIVE IN THE ROYAL ARMS APARTMENT HOTEL. IT ALL STARTED THE MORNING I WENT DOWN THE HALL TO VISIT MY FRIEND, EMILY DUNHAM.

YES, OH, IT'S FOLLOWS, MRS. CLAYTON.

IS JIMMY AT HOME, MR. DUNHAM? I...EH...WANTED TO GET A RECIPE.



END

FIRST LET ME SAY THAT, EVER SINCE I'D KNOWN HIM, WALLACE DURAND HAD ALWAYS BEEN SHY, QUIET, AND COMPLETELY DOMINATED BY HIS WIFE, EMILY. THAT MORNING, HE SEEMED LIKE AN ENTIRELY DIFFERENT PERSON. HE GRINNED AT ME...

EMILY'S GONE, MRS. CLAYTON SHE'S TAKEN A TRIP... TO THE COAST... TO VISIT RELATIVES.

OH? SHE DIDN'T MENTION IT!



WALLACE DURAND STOOD STRAIGHT, LOOKING AT ME DEFIANTLY. HE SEEMED TALLER SOMEDAY... TALLER THAN HE'D EVER BEEN - LIKE HEAVY WEIGHTS HAD BEEN DROPPED FROM HIS TIRED SHOULDERS...

IT WAS SUDDEN, MRS. CLAYTON. SHE LEFT LAST NIGHT, AND NOW IF YOU'LL EXCUSE ME...

Y-YES, MR. DURAND? I'M SORRY I DISTURBED YOU...



HE SLAMMED THE DOOR - SLAMMED IT, MIND YOURS DURAND... THE MIDDLETOWN... THE WEAKLING... SLAMMED THE DOOR IN MY FACE, I STOOD THERE SHOOKED! I COULDN'T BELIEVE IT...

EMILY'S GONE AWAY BEFORE, BUT WALLACE DURAND HAD NEVER BEHAVED THAT WAY WHILE SHE'S BEEN GONE. IT WAS AS IF HE KNEW SHE WASN'T COMING BACK...

I RANG FOR THE ELEVATOR. A COLD SHIVER RAN UP MY SPINE. I GLANCED AT MY WATCH, 8:40 STILL TIME.

WHAT? WHAT'S COME OVER HIM? HE'S LIKE A DIFFERENT MAN! HE'S NEVER ACTED LIKE THAT!

SOMETHING'S WRONG, I FEEL IT IN MY BONES! HE'S... HE'S DONE SOMETHING TO EMILY...



MORNING, MRS. CLAYTON.

GOOD MORNING, GEORGE... ER... YOU BEEN ON ALL NIGHT?



SINCE NINE P.M., WASN'T ANYTHING WRONG?

DID YOU TAKE MRS. DURAND DOWN LAST NIGHT, GEORGE? EMILY DURAND? SHE WOULD HAVE HAD A SUITCASE...

NO, WAH? I BROUGHT YOU AND MRS. DURAND UP AT TEN P.M. LAST NIGHT, REMEMBER? THAT'S THE LAST I SAW OF HER. DIDN'T TAKE HER DOWN LAST NIGHT AT ALL!

I SEE? OH, SUPPOSE SHE WALKED DOWN, GEORGE? WHO'S SHE HERE?



WALKED DOWN, MR. SLAYTON? FOURTEEN FLOORS? I HARDLY THINK SHE'D WALK DOWN, BESIDES, IF SHE DID, JED WOULD HAVE SEEN HER. HE WAS AT THE DESK ALL NIGHT... WORKIN' THE SHY TOWNSHIP.

ASK HIM FOR ME, WILL YOU, GEORGE? ASK JED IF HE SAW MRS. OR MR. DURAND LAST NIGHT?

GEORGE NODDED. THE ELEVATOR DOOR SLID CLOSED, AND IT WHINNED AWAY. I WATCHED THE HAND ABOVE SWING SLOWLY AROUND TOWARDS ONE. I WENT BACK TO MY OWN APARTMENT. MILTON WAS GETTING INTO HIS COAT. MILTON IS MY HUSBAND...

WELL, HENRIETTA... MILTON? HE'S GOOD-BYE! I'M OFF...

HUH? WHO? MR. DURAND? HE'S KILLED EMILY? I KNOW IT!



MILTON LOOKED AT ME AND BEGAN TO GIGGLE...

WALLY? KILL EMILY? DON'T BE SILLY! HE... HE WOULDN'T HAVE THE NERVE! WHAT MAKES YOU THINK SO?

HE'S ACTING SO STRANGELY, SO FUNNY. HE SAID EMILY WENT ON A TRIP, BUT I CHECKED. SHE HADN'T LEFT THIS BUILDING SINCE HE CAME HOME FROM THE WOMEN'S SOCIAL LAST NIGHT.



I HEARD THE ELEVATOR DOOR OUTSIDE SLIDE OPEN. I PEERED OUT, GEORGE WAS COMING TOWARD MY APARTMENT.

WELL, GEORGE? WHAT DID JED SAY?

HE SAID NOBODY CAME DOWN THOSE STAIRS LAST NIGHT, MA'AM. BUT NOBODY...



I THANKED GEORGE AND HE SHUFFLED OFF. I TURNED TO MILTON...

THEN SHE'S STILL IN THERE, MILTON? POOR EMILY... LYIN' DEAD IN THAT APARTMENT.

DON'T YOU THINK THAT IF WALLY DID MURDER EMILY, HE'D HAVE GOTTEN RID OF HER BODY, HENRIETTA?



NOW, MILTON! THAT'S JUST IT! HOW? HE COULDN'T CARRY HER BODY DOWN FOURTEEN FLIGHTS, BESIDES, JED SAID NOBODY CAME DOWN THE STAIRS LAST NIGHT. HE COULDN'T TAKE HER DOWN IN THE ELEVATOR, AND THE FIRE-ESCAPE WOULD BE TOO RISKY. NO? SHE'S STILL IN THERE?

WELL, I'M LATE. I'VE GOT TO GO TO THE OFFICE. LOOK, HENRIETTA... IF YOU'RE SO SURE WHY DON'T YOU CALL THE POLICE?



MILTON LEFT AND I HEARD THE ELEVATOR COME AND TAKE HIM DOWN. I WENT TO THE PHONE. I PICKED UP THE RECEIVER. I HESITATED...

I I CAN'T CALL THE POLICE. I HAVE NO PROOF. I'VE GOT TO HAVE PROOF.



I PUT DOWN THE PHONE AND WENT TO THE KITCHEN. I TOOK A MEASURING CUP FROM THE CUPBOARD AND WENT DOWN THE HALL TO THE DURAND APARTMENT. I KNOCKED. I HEARD FOOTSTEPS MOVING AROUND INSIDE, AND WALLACE DURAND OPENED THE DOOR...

OH, IT'S YOU AGAIN. NOW WHAT?

COULD I BORROW A CUP OF SUGAR, MR. DURAND? I'M A LITTLE SHORT?



I STARTED IN BUT MR. DURAND BLOCKED MY WAY. HE LIFTED THE CUP FROM MY HAND.

I'LL GET IT FOR YOU, MRS. CLAYTON.

OH, THANKS.



HE CLOSED THE DOOR AND LOCKED IT. HE WOULDN'T LET ME IN. HE WAS HIDING SOMETHING, ALL RIGHT. EMILY WAS IN THERE? POOR EMILY.

HERE YOU ARE?

SORRY TO BOTHER YOU, MR. DURAND.



HE SLAMMED THE DOOR. I WAS ALONE IN THE HALL. I WENT BACK TO MY APARTMENT. MY HAND SHOOK...

ALL RIGHT, WALLACE. DURAND? ALL RIGHT? I'LL GET THE PROOF. YOU'LL SEE...



I PULLED A CHAIR UP TO THE APARTMENT DOOR AND SAT DOWN. I OPENED IT A CRACK SO I COULD WATCH THE DURANDS' DOOR. I WAITED. AFTER AN HOUR, MR. DURAND CAME OUT...LOCKED THE DOOR CAREFULLY...AND PRESSED THE ELEVATOR BELL.



WHEN HE WAS GONE, I DARTED ACROSS THE LIVING ROOM AND OUT THE FRENCH DOORS. THE DURANDS AND WE SHARED A TERRACE. I CROSSED THE LOW DIVIDING WALL AND PEELED INTO THEIR APARTMENT THE BLINDS WERE SHOWN. I COULDN'T SEE. THE DOOR WAS LOCKED.

I WON'T GIVE UP. I WON'T. HE'S GOING TO HAVE TO TRY TO GET RID OF HER BODY. AND WHEN HE DOES...



ABOUT TWO HOURS LATER, WALLACE DURAND CAME BACK. HE CARRIED A SMALL CARTON ABOUT THE SIZE OF A SHOE-BOX...



HE LET HIMSELF INTO HIS APARTMENT, AND I HEARD HIM LOCK IT FROM THE INSIDE. I TOOK THE CUP OF SUGAR AND WENT DOWN THE HALL AND KNOCKED...



HE SEEMED ANNOYED. HE SMATCHED THE SUGAR, LOCKED THE DOOR, AND RETURNED WITH THE EMPTY GLASS...



HE SLAMMED THE DOOR IN MY FACE...



HE WAS DOING SOMETHING ALL RIGHT. IT WAS OBVIOUS. I WAS DETERMINED TO PROVE HIS HORRIFIC DEED. SO I WATCHED EVERY DAY. HE WENT OUT IN THE MORNING **EMPTY HANDED**...



AND EVERY DAY HE CAME BACK WITH ANOTHER SHOE-BOX...



FINALLY AFTER TWO MONTHS OF THIS...GOING OUT **EMPTY-HANDED** AND COMING BACK TWO HOURS LATER WITH THE INEVITABLE **SHOE BOX**, I ACCUSED HIM ONE DAY...



I THOUGHT MY EARS WERE DECEIVING ME. I HEARD IT PLAIN AS DAY. A SCRATCHING SOUND INSIDE THE BOX HE WAS CARRYING...

N-NEVER, MR. DURAND?

EMILY'S LEFT ME FOR GOOD? NOW IF YOU DON'T MIND...



HE WENT INSIDE. I WENT BACK TO MY APARTMENT. I TRIED TO THINK. WHAT DID HE HAVE IN THAT BOX? WAS EMILY'S BODY STILL IN THAT APARTMENT, OR HAD WALLACE DURAND MANAGED TO GET RID OF IT? AND THEN, THAT NIGHT, AS I RODE THE LIVING ROOM FLOOR...



WHAT'S THAT?

THERE WAS A FLAPPING SOUND OUT ON THE TERRACE. I TIPTOED TO THE FRENCH DOORS. WALLACE DURAND WAS OUT THERE... AND HE HELD SOMETHING IN HIS OUTSTRETCHED HANDS...

A. A. PIGEON!



MR. DURAND CHECKED THE SMALL CAN STRAPPED TO THE PIGEON'S LEG. THEN HE TOSSED THE BIRD INTO THE AIR AND WATCHED IT FLY OFF INTO THE NIGHT...

A... FLYING PIGEON!



I WOKED UP MILTON. I TOLD HIM WHAT I'D SEEN...

SO WHAT? WHAT IN BLAZES WAS ONE THING TO DO WITH THE OTHER?

DON'T YOU SEE, MILTON? HE'S BEEN GETTING RID OF EMILY'S REMAINS THAT WAS A LITTLE BIT AT A TIME... IN THAT CAN STRAPPED TO THE PIGEON'S LEG...



GOOD LORD. IT WOULD TAKE MONTHS!

I'M GOING TO CALL THE POLICE.



NOT WHAT? YOU CAN'T BE SURE? WHY DON'T YOU FOLLOW HIM TOMORROW MORNING? FIND OUT WHERE HE SETS THOSE BIRDS?



AND THEN I'LL SEE WHAT HE DOES WITH THE CONTENTS OF THE CAN.

THAT'LL BE THE PROOF YOU NEED!

YES. YES.



I TOOK MILTON'S ADVICE... AND THE NEXT DAY, I FOLLOWED WALLACE DURAND WHEN HE LEFT THE ROYAL ARMS APARTMENT HOTEL. HE TOOK A SUBWAY OUT OF THE CITY TO THE END OF THE LINE, THEN A BUS. I FOLLOWED THE BUS IN A TAXI...

HE'S GETTING OFF! ALL RIGHT, DRIVER. I'LL GET OUT HERE...



MR. DURAND WENT TO THE REAR OF A RUNDOWN SHACK. I COULD HEAR THE LOUD BARKING OF DOGS...



IT WAS ALL SO CLEAR. I WATCHED HIM UNTIL THE CAR FROM THE HOMING PIGEON THAT HAD ARRIVED THAT NIGHT AND EMPTY THE CONTENTS INTO THE KENNEL FULL OF SLEEPING HUNGRY DOGS...



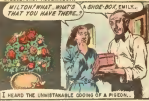
THEN HE TOOK ANOTHER PEESE FROM THE SOUP, PLACED IT IN A SHOE-BOX AND WENT AWAY. I WAITED UNTIL HE WAS GONE BEFORE I CAME OUT OF MY HIDE-PLACE. I FELT SICK... NAUSEOUS... POOR EMILY! WHEN I FINALLY GOT BACK TO MY APARTMENT...



MILTON YOU'RE HOME EARLY?

YES, EMILY! COME INS! I'VE BEEN WAITING!

MILTON LOOKED STRANGE. HE HAD A WILD GLEAM IN HIS USUALLY SAD EYES. EMILY AND I HAD BEEN ATTRACTED TO EACH OTHER BECAUSE WE WERE SO MUCH ALIKE... DOMINATING WIVES WHO LOOMED OVER SHY, QUIET, MELLOWED-HUSBANDS...



A SHOE-BOX, EMILY.

MILTON! WHAT, WHAT'S THAT YOU HAVE THERE.

I HEARD THE UNMISTAKABLE COOING OF A PIGEON...

I SCREAMED AND RUSHED FOR THE BED-ROOM. I LOCKED MYSELF IN. I WAS TRAPPED. MILTON DISGLED... HIS VOICE DRIFTING THROUGH THE DOOR...

WE PLANNED IT THIS WAY, HENRIETTA! FIRST WALLY, THEN WE'VE RENTED THE SHACK, THE DOGS, THE PIGEONS... BUT YOU FOUND OUT... TOO SOON...



THE DOOR IS OPENING. I'LL HAVE TO STOP WRITING... SO NOW, EVEN THOUGH WALLY ISN'T THROUGH GETTING RID OF EMILY'S BOO... I'LL HAVE TO START HENRIETTA... START BY KILLING YOU... THEN CUTTING YOU UP INTO TINY LITTLE PIECES... BIG ENOUGH TO FIT IN CANS...



HE'S COMING TOWARD ME. HE'S

AT THIS POINT OUR MANUSCRIPT ENDS, KIDDIES... ENDS IN A BLOODY SNAFF! HENRIETTA IS NOW... FOR THE BIRDS! NOW DID I GET HOLD OF THIS LITTLE YARN, YOU ASK? SO WHO DO YOU THINK OWNED THE SHACK, THE DOGS... THE PIGEONS?



THAT WAS THE DEAL! WALLY AND MILTON GOT THE USE OF THEM FOR THE STORY RIGHTS, NEHHEH. NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO THE DRAFT-KEEPER. SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, THE MAG OF HORRORFUL THEM. COOOO!



**WE AT E.C. ARE PROUDEST  
OF OUR SCIENCE - FICTION  
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**LOOK FOR  
THESE SEALS  
WHEN YOU BUY!**

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**TIGHT  
SQUEEZE!**

Not ten seconds after Kendall had seized the payroll bag and started toward the factory exit, he knew he was being pursued. He could hear their feet clattering along the concrete walk behind him, then a shot screamed along the corridor and ricocheted off the wall not five feet from his head. They were armed . . . and they meant business. And from the sound their shoes were making, there were at least three guards tracking him.

Almost in panic, Kendall clawed at his coat pocket and fumbled his gun free as he ran. It was the three guards against him . . . their lives against his own, he thought as he fled. They had him badly outnumbered . . . there wasn't much chance for him to escape . . .

Then he saw the steel staircase spiraling up far overhead to the catwalk which ran the length of the factory. This might help him squeeze out of the trap, Kendall thought, as he raced frenziedly up the steps. In another moment he was scampering along the catwalk and could hear them pounding up the steps after him. In a second they'd have him cornered; if he turned to fight, their bullets would cut him down in the first exchange of hot lead. And if he surrendered, it meant conviction for the fourth time . . . imprisonment for the rest of his life!

He stopped momentarily, amazement on his face. There, just a short

jump below, was a small area surrounded by steel walls. If he could just reach that haven, he'd be able to shoot at the guards as they came after him along the catwalk. And their own shots would be shrugged aside by those gleaming metal plates!

The jump jarred him more than he had expected: it was a half-minute before he recovered his balance and turned back to face the oncoming guards. The first of them reared up above him, leveled his gun. But he never pulled the trigger, because a bullet from below sent him reeling backwards.

Kendall crouched lower behind the steel walls . . . heard the guards' bullets ploughing into the plates with a shrill whine, then bounce harmlessly aside. He was safe, Kendall grinned to himself. At least for the moment. They couldn't get him with their guns . . . and if the two remaining guards gave him even the slightest target, he'd shoot to kill! Just one shot at each of the guards . . . that was all Kendall wanted . . .

A whirring sound made him pause in fear. He must be seeing things, he thought . . . but no! The steel plates that sheltered him . . . they were grinding toward one another, moving together ominously! He leaped to his feet and began to scream out his surrender, but it was too late! The walls could not be stopped . . . already they were pressing against him on each side. Already they were crushing his chest and legs . . . squeezing the breath out of his tortured lungs . . . mashing him into a bloody shadow on the sides of the huge steel vise he had heedlessly plunged into!



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# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Heh, heh! Guess all you EVANS fans can stop howling now! Gorgeous George's biography and pictures, as you probably noticed, and if you haven't, why not?, is on the inside front cover of this miserable mag. And now YOU can stop howling TOO, George! Ya Gads, these apologetic critics! Glory . . . glory . . . all they want is hate and fame! Now take ME! All I want is FORTUNE . . . and all I get is FAMOUS! (In-famous would be a BETTER word, C.K., old boy!—ed.) I don't see them handing YOU TWO any laurel wreaths, you moon-buggy perverts! (Moose? What's "moose," AL? Diana, Sil. Sounds familiar, but there sure ain't been none of that stuff 'round HERE in some time!—ed.) Ah, you poor, poor boys! Isn't it a pity? You'll have to drive your LAST YEAR'S Cadillac for a while yet! (Bet C.K.'s THE ASH-TRAYS are FULL!—ed.) Reckin'-buns, I presume! (O course . . . and KING-SIZE, too!—ed.) Oh, DIG those CRA-ZY good-natured! And so on and so on!

Dear Crypto-Keeper,

We are three intellectual college ghosts who spend our evenings reading your degenarous literature. The protagonists in your most horrible stories remind us of some of our long-lost dates. (Now we know what happened to them!) Due to our advanced education, we are properly equipped to fully appreciate your subtility and sarcasm. Please print this as we boys!! De-generatly yours,

Slimy Syd  
Mammefed Myrna  
Fast Flava Javie

PROTAGONISTS!! Man! DIG those CRA-ZY co-ed!

Dear Padge-Pad,

All of your stories turned everyone on the house a lovely shade of green. My Aunt Mawmaw was eating when she read your book, and she's been in the re-gurgitatorium to count word, so don't throw it up to me!! for the past week. I personally thank you most for crapp, but then again we all!

Believe Zorrich  
Sanderly Ohio

CRA-ZY, man! That's what I said! DIG them CHARTELISE Ohioans!

Most Beloved Crypto-Keeper,

I'm a steady fan of yours, and enjoy all of the EC magz very much! Here are a few additional titles for your "horror but paradi":

LADY OF PAIN (I will give you!)  
GONE SQUISHIN'  
I'LL DISMEMBER APRIL!  
CAN'T HELP LOATHING THAT CLAN  
OF NINE

Ralph Chapman  
Anchorage, Alas.

THE WHITE STUFF OF DOVER  
ALL OF ME . . . WHY NOT EAT ALL  
OF ME  
I'M RUKIN' OVER MY DEAD DOG  
ROVER

Dick Daggen  
Delaware, Iowa

MAN! That dog is REAL GONE!

How about that?  
JUMBEDEYERBALLS  
THE BLOODIEST BITS OF THE EAR  
I WANT A GHOUL JUST LIKE THE  
GHOUL THAT BURIED DEAR OLD  
DAD

Maura (Ma) Miller  
Chicago, Ill

DIG that CRA-ZY barbershop!

How do you like:  
OLD MACDONALD WAS ENHANCED  
WHEN YOU AND I WERE HUNG,  
MAGGIE!

Dave Gordon and  
Dick Mervel  
Brooklyn, Mass.

DIG that . . . (Hey C.K.! Ditch the bast . . . here comes COPS in a SQUAD CAR . . . down '90 mph!—ed.)

DOOOOOOOOOOOO!  
(O K, C.K./They're gone!—ed.)  
MAN! I thought they'd NEVER leave!

Dear C.K.,

The story by Ray Bradbury, "There Was an Old Woman," (T.C. No. 34) was kept. I read the original, but forgets did it more than justice with his fine illustrations!

Warren A. Freiberg  
Cairo, Ill

... I love your mag, but I think that Ray Bradbury's story . . . stunk! What happened?

Ed Redling  
Paterson, N. J

Well, we can't please EVERYBODY! Anyway, Mr. FREIBERG will be happy to find EC's adaptation of Mr. B's "The Handler" . . . also illustrated by Ghastly Graham Ingels! . . . in the wind-up spot of this issue. Before closing, a couple of "it's-gonna-cost-you-money-if-a-ya-ruckus-enough-to-beat" announcements. A limited number (seven hundred fifty-two thousand one hundred and sixty-nine) of copies of the 3rd annual TALES OF TERROR, EC's anthology of horror and Supernatural, are now cluttering up the office. Help us unload? 25¢! Also . . . subscriptions to any EC mag 75¢ 6 magz! Address for either or both of the above, mail, poetry, books, letters, or 1955 Cadillac to:

The Crypt-Keeper  
Room 166, Dept. 36  
225 Lafayette St.  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

DIG that CRA-ZY weborg!

here's some more

HERE'S A TERROR-TALE OF  
SPORTING LIFE! I CALL IT...

# HOW GREEN WAS MY ALLEY



HIS JOB AS A TRAVELING SALESMAN HAD ENABLED ROBERT TO KEEP UP THE DECEPTION FOR THREE EXCITING YEARS. IT HAD BEEN SO SIMPLE TO CARRY ON HIS DOUBLE LIFE, SPENDING A WEEK WITH ANNE, A WEEK WITH JEAN, AND TWO WEEKS ON THE ROAD. YES, ROBERT SMITH WAS A NEARIST.

MUST YOU GO, DON'T YOU KNOW HOW I MISS YOU WHEN YOU'RE AWAY.



NOT TO EARN A LIVING, ANY MONEY. WELL, GOOD-BYE, SEE YOU IN A MONTH.

ROBERT LOOKED DOWN AT SLIM, DARKHAired ANNE. SHE SNUGGLED SLEEPILY IN THE BED, REACHING TOWARD HIM...

KISS ME GOOD-BYE AND WITH ME LUCK. THE NATIONAL WOMAN'S AMATEUR ATHLETIC TOURNAMENTS ARE TWO WEEKS OFF...

SAY I'LL ALMOST FORGIVE YOUR GOLF TOURNAMENTS. I DON'T YOU SOMETHING.



ROBERT WENT OUT TO THE CAR. HE UNLOCKED THE TRUNK. INSIDE WERE TWO CAREFULLY WRAPPED PACKAGES. HE CHOSE ONE AND BROUGHT IT BACK INTO THE HOUSE TO THE BEDROOM...



HERE, HONEY! FOR ME, FOR LOOK!  
BOB? BOB? SWEET! WHAT IS IT?

ROBERT PUT OUT HIS HAND...

WAIT! DON'T OPEN IT NOW! NOT UNTIL YOU GET TO YOUR GOLF TOURNAMENT! IT'S A SURPRISE! IT MAY HELP YOU WIN...



AMY PUT DOWN THE PACKAGE AND SLIPPED HER ARMS AROUND ROBERT'S NECK...

I REALLY HAVE TO GET GOING, HONEY! IT'S LATE! I CAN BEAT! HOW CAN BUSINESS BE MORE IMPORTANT THAN... PLEASURE?



ROBERT SLIPPED AWAY FROM AMY AND PICKED UP HIS BAGS. SHE FOLLOWED HIM TO THE DOOR...

YOU'LL COME DOWN AND SEE ME PLAY, BOB? TWO WEEKS FROM TOMORROW... AT THE N.R.A.A. COURSE IN SPRING DALE. I'LL BE AT THE HOTEL! I'VE RESERVED A DOUBLE ROOM!

OF COURSE, HONEY! YOU KNOW I WOULDN'T MISS MY WIFE'S CAPTURING THE WOMEN'S NATIONAL AMATEUR GOLF CHAMPIONSHIP!



BOB CHUCKLED AS HE DROVE OFF...

MY ATHLETIC WOMEN! LITTLE DID I KNOW, WHEN I SUGGESTED TO AMY THAT SHE TAKE UP GOLF WHILE I WAS AWAY ON THE ROAD, THAT SHE'D BECOME SUCH AN EXPERT GOLFER. NOW SHE'S ENTERED IN THE N.R.A.A. CHAMPIONSHIPS.



THE CAR ROARED NORTH THROUGH SMALL TOWNS AND OVER MILES OF HIGHWAYS UNTIL, THE NEXT NIGHT...

HOB, HONEY! I THOUGHT YOU'D BE BACK TONIGHT! I CAME HOME FROM PRACTICE EARLY...

JEAN, BABY!



SHE TOSSED HER BODY TO THE FLOOR AND HE WAS IN HER ARMS. JEAN WAS HEAVIER THAN ANY MORE MUSCULAR. HER HAIR FELL IN SOFT GOLDEN TRESSSES ABOUT HER BARE SHOULDERS...

OH, DARLING! I MISSED YOU! I MISSED YOU!

AND I MISSED YOU, HELL, I DON'T LIKE THIS ONE-FEET-A-MONTH DEAL ANY MORE THAN YOU DO...



HEN, HEN! WELL, HODDIE, THAT'S THE PICTURE. LOVER BOY COMMITTED BETWEEN WIVES. ONE WEEK WITH SLIM, SWEET ANY - ONE WEEK WITH BROWN JEAN FOR THREE YEARS, THIS LITTLE RACKET HAD BEEN GOING ON. ANY TOOK UP SELF WHILE ROBERT DARLING WAS ON THE ROAD. KNOW WHAT JEAN TOOK UP? READ ON...



THE WEEK WAS OVER. JEAN AND BOB WERE SAYING GOOD-BYE...

WHAT IS IT, BOB? DON'T OPEN A SURPRISE... IF JEAN! YOU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT A TOURNAMENT LAST MONTH WHEN I WAS HOME...



YES, THE W.A.A.A. BOWLING TOURNAMENT, IT'S NEXT WEEK. I'VE QUALIFIED...

WELL, AFTER YOU GET THERE, THEN OPEN IT, HONEY. IT'LL HELP YOU WIN.



YES, JEAN HAD TAKEN UP BOWLING. ROBERT HAD SUGGESTED IT, AND LIKE ANY, JEAN HAD PROVEN HIMSELF VERY ADAPT AT NEW CHOSEN SPORT...

JUST THINK! MY WIFE YOU WILL COME DOWN AND A CHAMPION BOWLER. SEE ME BOWL NEXT WEEK, WON'T YOU, HONEY?



OF COURSE, JEAN. WHERE'D YOU SAY IT WAS?

SPRINGDALE? THE W.A.A.A.'S ALLEYS THERE.



SPRINGDALE? BUT... BUT I THOUGHT THERE WAS A GOLF COURSE THERE.

THERE IS, AND TENNIS COURTS, AND A POOL. THE W.A.A.A. HOLDS ALL ITS TOURNAMENTS THERE. YOU WILL COME, WON'T YOU? I HAVE A RESERVATION FOR A DOUBLE ROOM...

WELL, I'LL, I'LL TRY TO MAKE IT, HONEY. AT LEAST I'LL STOP BY YOUR HOTEL TO WISH YOU LUCK!

OH, DARLING, I'LL MAKE YOU SO PROUD OF ME. NOW... KISS ME GOOD-NITE!



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WELL, HOW DO BOTH  
MEN WILL BE IN  
AT THE SAME  
YOU OUGHT TO BE  
THAT "SMITH" IS A  
F. AMY AND JEAN  
SAID ANYTHING.  
IT RIGHT... NO ONE  
E. MOORE

HEMM. *SPRINGDALE* PROBABLY HAS ONLY *ONE* MOTEL. THEY'LL BOTH BE THERE. YES, *THAT* THIS IS GOING TO BE *FOUR*.

BUT THEN, AGAINST THE LAST  
THREE YEARS?

SPRINGDALE'S ONE HOTEL WAS A BUSTLE OF EXCITEMENT ON THE FIRST DAY OF TOURNAMENT WEEK. THE LOBBY WAS JAMPED.

SOBRIETY, NO RECORD,  
ALL FILLED UP.

YOU HAVE A SPECIAL  
MESSAGE FOR ME.  
I DON'T KNOW

MR. ROBERT  
SANTACROCE  
IN COURT  
MAY 1968

BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE.  
I'M MR. ROBERT SMITH.  
HERE'S YOUR LETTER  
ACKNOWLEDGING MY  
RENEWAL.

OH, GEAR. THERE'S BEEN A MISTAKE. OBVIOUSLY THERE ARE TWO MR. ROBERT SMITHS. I SEE *FOUR* FROM GENTLE CITY. THE ONE THAT RESISTED THIS MORNING IS FROM LET'S SEE... *LAKEVIEW*.

LARRY: DID I  
HEAR SOMEONE  
MENTION LARRY?  
HERE THAT'S  
MY...

OH, MRS. SMITH, I'M SO GLAD YOU'RE HERE. THERE'S BEEN A TERRIBLE ERROR. LET ME INTRODUCE YOU TO MR. ROBERT SMITH.

SEEMS WE HAVE  
THE SAME  
ALIAS, HONEY.  
AND THE SAME  
ROOM RESER-  
VATION.

LARRY: I HAVE A  
BRAIN LIGHT IDEA!  
WHY DON'T YOU  
TWO SHARE THE  
ROOM? I SEE THAT  
IT'S A DOUBLE.

WELL, MY  
HUSBAND IS  
COMING DOWN  
TO SEE ME.  
FLAT.

BO'S NAME, BUT  
WE COULD DOUBLE  
UP UNTIL THEY  
STRAIGHTEN THIS  
SHIT OUT.

OH, YES! WE'LL  
GET THINGS UP  
THIS IS ALL  
OUR FAULT.

O'MOM,  
HONEY! MY  
NAME'S  
AMY!  
WHAT'S  
YOURS?

JEAN!  
I  
BOWE...

I PLAY GOLF  
ER... BOY!  
TAKE THESE  
BAGS TO  
ROOM 204.

ISN'T IT A COIN-  
CIDENCE... I MEAN  
US HAVING THE  
SAME MARRIED  
NAME!

WELL, HONEY...  
ROBERT SMITH  
IS AN awfully  
COMMON NAME!  
IN HERE...

I GUESS SO.  
MY BOB IS  
A TRAVELING  
SALESMAN...



HE'Y BOB'S MINE! I  
HARDLY SEE HIM! ONLY  
ONE WEEK A MONTH!

HERE, BOB! THANKS.  
DID YOU SAY ONE WEEK  
A MONTH? THAT'S  
OUR ARRANGEMENT,  
TOO!

I GUESS ALL TRAVELING  
SALESMEN'S WIVES HAVE IT  
AROUND. THAT'S WHY I  
TOOK UP GOLF.

SAME HERE... WITH  
MY BOWLING. IT GAVE  
ME SOMETHING TO DO!  
OH, I FORGOT...



MY HUSBAND GAVE ME THIS  
PACKAGE. IT'S A SUR-  
PRISE. I WAS SUPPOSED  
TO OPEN IT WHEN I  
GOT HOME...

THAT'S FUNNY! I  
HAVE ONE, TOO! HERE!  
SEE?

THE TWO GIRLS STRUGGLED WITH THEIR PACKAGES...  
TEARING THEM OPEN FERVOROUSLY...

WHAT THE...?

GOOD LORD!





AMY STARED AT THE SHOES WITH THE ONE RUBBER SOLE AND THE ONE LEATHER ONE...

THESE... THESE ARE  
*BOWLING SHOES...*



JEAN STARED AT HER GIFT... SHOES WITH METAL CLEATS...

AND... *THESE ARE  
GOLF SHOES.*



THEN IT DAWNED UPON THEM. THEY LOOKED AT EACH OTHER...

BUT... BUT  
*I PLAY GOLF!*

AND I...  
*BOWL!*



IN SILENCE THEY EACH RUMMAGED THROUGH THEIR SUITCASES, TOSING CLOTHES ASIDE.



AND WHEN THEY EACH FOUND WHAT THEY WERE LOOKING FOR, THEY HELD THE TWO PHOTOGRAPHS UP... COMPARING THEM...



SO THEY WAITED FOR ROBERT TOGETHER...

WHAT THE... HELLO, COME IN  
BOB! OUR HUSBAND!



THE NEXT MORNING, WHEN THE TOURNAMENT STARTED, THE JUDGES FOUND AMY ON THE FIRST GREEN OF THE GOLF COURSE, HER HAIR STRINGY, HER FACE PALE, SLEEPFULLY PRACTICING HER PUTTING...



Amy WAS USING ROBERT'S EYEBALLS...

AND THEY FOUND JEAN AT THE ALLEYS WHEN THEY CAME TO OPEN THEM UP. SHE WAS PRACTICING HER BOWLING...



JEAN WAS USING ROBERT'S EYELESS HEAD.

HEH, HEH. AND THE MORAL OF THE STORY TODDIES IS DON'T BE A *MASHIE* AND *SPOON* WITH A *SHRINE* WIFE OR YOU'LL *STRIKE OUT* IN THE *LAST FRAME*. AND HOBBOY WILL TELL FOWL BECAUSE *ONE WIFE IS PAIR* FOR THE *COURSE*. SO IF YOU FEEL LIKE *PUNNING* YOURSELF DOWN, DON'T *SPEST* YOUR AFFECTION. *ONE SIB* IS ENOUGH FOR *ANY DUFFERS*!

HEH, HEH! AND NOW THE *OLD WITCH* WANTS TO WIND UP MY TERROR-MAA. 'BYE, NOW. REMEMBER OLD *BOLPER'S* NEVER ON!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLO, HERE, IT'S YOUR DIETICIAN IN DISGUISE DRAMA. THE OLD WITCH, READY TO STIR UP ANOTHER STEAK-SNACK IN MY CAULDRON HERE IN THE MOUNT OF FEAR, TO COME IN, HODDIE, AND SIT DOWN BY THE FIRE. THIS TIME, MY MENU CONSISTS OF ANOTHER ADAPTION OF A TALE BY MY BOSS, BRADBURY. REVOLTING RAY, AS I AFFECTIONATELY CALL HIM. LISTEN TO RAY BRADBURY'S SUPERS...

## THE HANDLER

MR. BENEDICT WALKED DOWN THE STEPS AND OUT THE GATE, WITHOUT ONCE LOOKING AT HIS LITTLE MORTUARY BUILDING. HE SAID THAT PLEASURE FOR LATER IT WAS VERY IMPORTANT THAT THINGS TOOK THE RIGHT PRECEDENCE. IT WOULDN'T PAY TO THINK WITH JOY OF THE BODIES AWAITING HIS TALENTS IN THE MORTUARY BUILDING. NO, IT WAS BETTER TO FOLLOW HIS USUAL DAY AFTER DAY ROUTINE. HE WOULD LET THE CONFLICT BEGIN...



MR. BENEDICT KNEW JUST WHEN TO GET HIMSELF ENGAGED. HE SPOKE WITH MR. RODGERS, THE DRUG DIST., AND HE SAVED AND PUT AWAY ALL THE SLURS AND INTORATIONS AND INSULTS.



MR. ROGERS ALWAYS HAD SOME TERRIBLE THING TO SAY ABOUT A MAN IN THE FURERAL PROFESSION, AND OUTSIDE THE DRUG-STORE, MR. BENEDET MET UP WITH MR. STUTTSBART, THE CONTRACTOR.

OH, HELLO, BENEDET. HOW'S BUSINESS? ALL YER, YER? BET YOU'RE GOING AT IT **TOOTH AND NAIL**, DID YOU **BET** IT? I SAID **TOOTH AND NAIL**. YOUR BUSINESS, MR. STUTTSBART?



AND ON IT WENT, PERIOD AFTER PERIOD.

SAY, HOW DO YOUR HANDS GET SO **COLD**? BENEDET OLD MAN? THAT'S A **COLD SHAKE** YOU GOT THERE. YOU JUST GOT DONE EMBALMING A **FRIED WOMAN**? YER, THAT'S **HOT** SAYS, YOU HEARD WHAT I SAID?

GOOD, GOOD? WELL...GOOD SAY?



MR. BENEDET WAS THE LAKE INTO WHICH ALL REFUSE WAS THROWN. PEOPLE BEGAN WITH PEBBLES, AND WHEN MR. BENEDET DID NOT RIPPLE, THEY HEAVED A STONE... A BRICK... A BOULDER.

THERE YOU ARE, NEXT CHOPPER! NOW ARE ALL YOUR CORNED-BEEFS AND PICKLED BRAINS?



THAT WAS MR. FLINGER, THE DELICATESSEN MAN. THERE WERE MORE, MANY MORE. THINGS WORKED TO A CRESCENDO. FINALLY, MR. BENEDET TURNED WILDT AND RAN BACK THROUGH TOWN. HE WAS ALL READY NOW.

SOME BODY WASH! ON YOU, MR. BENEDET? HEY? BET IF I SAID SOME **GOOF**.



THE AWFUL PART OF THE DAY WAS OVER. THE GOOD PART WAS NOW TO BEGIN! HE RAN EAGERLY UP THE STEPS OF HIS MORTUARY.



THE ROOM WAITED LIKE A FALL OF SNOW. THERE WERE WHITE HUMMOCKS AND PALE DELINEATIONS OF THINGS RECURRENT UNDER SHEETS IN THE DIMNESS. MR. BENEDET PLUNGED OVER THE OODR.



HE WAS THE PUPPET-MASTER COME HOME.

HE STOOD FOR A LONG MINUTE IN THE VERY CENTER OF HIS THEATER, IN HIS HEAD APPLAUSE, PERHAPS, THUNDERED. THEN HE CAREFULLY REMOVED HIS COAT, GOT INTO A FRESH WHITE SMOKE, AND RUBBED HIS HANDS TOGETHER AS HE LOOKED AT HIS VERY GOOD FRIENDS.



HE WALKED ALONG THE SLEEPING ROWS OF SHEETED PEOPLE. IT HAD BEEN A FINE WEEK, THERE WERE ANY NUMBER OF FAMILY RELICS LYING THERE HE NOTED EACH NAME ON ITS WHITE CARD...

MRS. WALTERS, MR. SMITH, MISS BROWN, MR. ANDREWS, AH, GOOD AFTERNOON, ONE AND ALL!



MR. BENEDICT LIFTED A SHEET AS IF LOOKING FOR A CHILD UNDER A BED...

HOW ARE YOU TODAY, MRS. SHELLMUND? YOU'RE LOOKING *SPLENDID*, DEAR LADY!



MR. BENEDICT PULLED UP A CHAIR AND, REGARDING MRS. SHELLMUND THROUGH A MAGNIFYING GLASS...

MY DEAR MRS. SHELLMUND, DO YOU REALIZE, MY LADY, THAT YOU HAVE A *SEVERED CONDITION* OF THE FORESKIN OIL AND GREASE PIMPLES. A RICH, RICH DIET WAS YOUR TROUBLE. TOO MANY FROSTIES AND SPONGIE CAKES AND CREAM DANDIES. YOU ALWAYS PRIED YOURSELF ON YOUR BRAIN, MRS. SHELLMUND...



BUT YOU *FEET* THAT WONDERFUL, PRICELESS BRAIN OF YOURS AFOUNT IN *PARFETS* AND *FIZZES* AND *LIMEADES* AND *SOODAS* AND WERE SO VERY SUPERIOR TO ME THAT NOW, MRS. SHELLMUND, HERE IS WHAT SHALL HAPPEN...



MR. BENEDICT DID A NEAT OPERATION ON HER, CUTTING THE SCALP IN A CIRCLE, HE LIFTED IT OFF, THEN LIFTED OUT THE BRAIN, THEN HE PREPARED A CAKE CONFECTIONER'S LITTLE SUGAR-BELLOWS AND SQUORTED HER EMPTY HEAD FULL OF WHIPPED CREAM AND CRYSTAL, RESSONS, STARS AND PROLIPS, IN PINK, WHITE AND GREEN, AND ON TOP HE PRINTED A FINE PINK SCROLL...



THEN HE PUT THE SKULL BACK ON AND SEWED IT IN PLACE AND HED THE MARKS WITH WAX AND POWDER AND WALKED ON TO THE NEXT TABLE...

GOOD AFTERNOON, MR. WREN, AND NOW IS THE MASTER OF RACIAL HATREDS TODAY *PURE, WHITE LAUNDERED* MR. WREN. *CLEAN AS SNOW, WHITE AS LILIES*. THE MAN WHO HATED JEWS AND NEGROES. DO YOU KNOW WHAT I'M GOING TO DO TO YOU, MR. WREN? FIRST, LET US DRAW YOUR BLOOD FROM YOU, INTOLERANT FRIEND!



THE BLOOD WAS DRAWN OFF...

NOW...THE INJECTION OF, YOU MIGHT SAY, *EMBALMING FLUID*.



MR. WREN, SNOW-WHITE, LINDY PURE, LAY WITH THE FLUID GOING IN HIM, MR. BENEDICT LAUGHED. MR. WREN TURNED BLACK. *BLACK AS DIRT! BLACK AS INK!*



THE SMALL MINE FLUID WAS... *JOKE!*

MR. BENEDICT SEVERED WORTH'S HEAD, PUT IT IN A COFFIN ON A SMALL PILLOW, FACING UP, THEN HE PLACED ONE HUNDRED NINETY POUNDS OF BRICKS IN THE COFFIN AND ARRANGED THEM TO LOOK LIKE A BODY IT WAS A FINE ILLUSION



THE OTHER TWO CASKETS WERE FILLED WITH PEBBLES AND SHELLS AND BAVELS OF GINGHAM. IT WAS A FINE SERVICE, EVERYBODY CRIED...



THOSE THREE INSEPARABLES, AT LAST SEPARATED?

HEP, HEP,

MR. BENEDICT MOVED ON

AND HELD TO YOU, EDMUND WORTH. WHAT A HANDSOME BODY YOU HAD, POWERFUL, WITH MUSCLES PINNED FROM HIDE BONE TO HIDE BONE, AND A CHEST LIKE A BOWLER. WOMEN GREW SPEECHLESS WHEN YOU WALKED BY... MEN STARED WITH ENVY? AND NOW, HERE YOU ARE...



SINCE IT WAS A GROWING AND POPULAR HABIT IN THE TOWN FOR PEOPLE TO BE BURIED WITH THE COFFIN LIDS CLOSED OVER THEM DURING THE SERVICE, THIS GAVE MR. BENEDICT GREAT OPPORTUNITIES TO VENT HIS REPRESSIONS ON HIS RAPLESS GUESTS. HE HAD THE MOST UTTERLY WORTHLESS FUN WITH A GROUP OF OLD MAIDEN LADIES WHO WERE WASHED IN AN AUTO ON THEIR WAY TO AN AFTER-NOON TEA. THEY WERE FAMOUS GOSSIPERS, ALWAYS WITH HEADS TOGETHER OVER SOME CHOICE BIT. AS IN LIFE, ALL THREE WERE CROWDED INTO ONE CASKET, HEADS TOGETHER IN ETERNAL FOLD-RETIFFED GOSSIP



NOT LACKING FOR A SENSE OF JUSTICE, MR. BENEDICT BURIED ONE RICH MAN STARK NAKED.



A POOR MAN HE BURIED WOUND IN GOLD CLOTH, WITH FIVE DOLLAR GOLD PIECES FOR BUTTONS AND TWENTY DOLLAR GOLD COINS ON EACH EYELID.



A LANTERN HE DID NOT BURN AT ALL...  
BUT BURNED MEN IN THE INCINERATOR...



HIS COFFIN CONTAINED NOTHING  
BUT A MOLE-CAT, TRAPPED IN THE  
WOODS ONE SUNDAY.



AN OLD MAN WAS THE VICTIM OF  
A TERRIBLE DEVISE. UNDER THE  
SILKEN COMFORTER, PARTS OF AN  
OLD MAN HAD BEEN BURIED WITH  
HER, THERE SHE LAY BEING MADE  
COLD LOVE TO BY HIDDEN HANDS  
AND THINGS. THE SHOOC  
SHOWED ON HER FACE,  
TOMEWHAT...



SO MR. BENEDICT MOVED FROM BODY TO BODY IN HIS  
MORTUARY. THE FINAL BODY OF THE DAY WAS THE  
BODY OF ONE MERRIWELL BLYTHE, AN ANCIENT MAN  
AFFLICTED WITH SPILLS AND COMAS. MR. BLYTHE  
HAD BEEN BROUGHT IN FOR DEAD SEVERAL TIMES,  
BUT EACH TIME HE HAD REVIVED IN TIME TO PREVENT  
PREMATURE BURIAL. MR. BENEDICT PULLED BACK  
THE SHEET...



MR. BENEDICT FELL AGAINST THE SLAB, SUDDENLY  
SHAKEN AND SICK...



THE OLD MAN ON THE SLAB SAILED, ROLLING HIS EYES  
ABOUT IN HIS HEAD IN WHITE ORBITS...

"OH, YOU DARK DARK THING, YOU ANGEL THING, YOU  
FIEND, YOU MONSTER, GET ME UP FROM HERE! I'LL  
TELL THE MAYOR AND THE DOUNGE AND EVERYONE,  
OH, YOU DARK DARK THING! YOU DEFILER AND  
SADIST, YOU PERVERTED SCOUNDREL... YOU  
TERRIBLE MAN..."



THE OLD MAN SHRIEKED, FROTHING...

TO THINK THIS HAS GONE ON IN OUR TOWN  
ALL THESE YEARS AND WE NEVER JONER THE  
THE THINGS YOU DID TO PEOPLE! OH YOU  
MONSTROUS MONSTER, THE THINGS YOU  
SAID! THE THINGS YOU DO!"



MR. BENEDICT REACHED FOR A HYPODERMIC...

MR. BENEDICT STABBED MR. BLYTHE IN THE ARM WITH THE NEEDLE. THE OLD MAN CRIED WILDLY TO ALL THE SHEETED FIGURES...

"YOU HELP ME!  
YOU OUT THERE, UNDER  
THE STONES, HELP  
ME! LISTEN!"



THE OLD MAN FELL BACK. HE KNEW HE WAS DYING...

"ALL, LISTEN! WE'S DONE THIS  
TO ME, AND YOU, AND YOU, ALL  
OF YOU. HE'S DONE TOO MUCH,  
TOO LONG. DON'T TAKE IT!  
DON'T, DON'T LET HIM DO ANY  
MORE TO ANYONE!"



MR. BENEDICT STOOD THERE...

"FACT CAN'T GO  
ANYTHING TO ME,  
AND NEITHER CAN  
YOU!"

"OUT OF YOUR  
GRAVE, HELP  
ME! TONIGHT,  
OR TOMORROW,  
OR SOON. BUT  
COME AND FLY  
ME... THIS  
HORRIBLE  
MAN!"



THE OLD MAN RAVED ON AND ON, GETTING WEAKER. THE ROOM WAS SUDDENLY VERY DARK. IT WAS NIGHT. IT WAS GETTING LATE. FINALLY, SMILING, THE OLD MAN WHISPERED...

"THEY'VE TAKEN A LOT FROM YOU, HORRIBLE MAN.  
TONIGHT, THEY'LL... DO... SOMETHING."



...AND THEN, THE OLD MAN DIED...

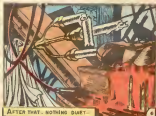
PEOPLE SAY THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION THAT NIGHT, IN THE GRAVEYARD, OR RATHER A SERIES OF EXPLOSIONS, A SMELL OF STRANGE THINGS, A MOVEMENT, A VIOLENCE, A RAINING, STONES TOPPLED AND THINGS SWORE OATHS...



...AND THERE WAS A CHAOS AND A SCREAMING, AND MANY SHADOWS, MOVING INSIDE AND OUTSIDE THE MORTUARY BUILDING IN SWIFT JERKS AND SHAKING. WINDOWS BROKE. DOORS WERE TORN FROM HINGES, LEAVES FROM TREES, IRON GATES CLATTERED...



...AND IN THE END, THERE WAS MR. BENEDICT RUNNING ABOUT, RUNNING ABOUT, YAWNING, AND A TORTURED SCREAM THAT COULD ONLY BE MR. BENEDICT HIMSELF...



AFTER THAT, NOTHING QUITE...

THE TOWN PEOPLE ENTERED THE MORTUARY THE NEXT MORNING. THEY SEARCHED THE MORTUARY BUILDING AND THEN WENT OUT INTO THE GRAVEYARD, AND THEY FOUND NOTHING BUT BLOOD, A VAST QUANTITY OF BLOOD, SPRINKLED AND THROWN AND SPREAD EVERYWHERE YOU COULD POSSIBLY LOOK, AS IF THE HEAVENS HAD BLEED PROFOUNDLY IN THE NIGHT...



WHERE COULD HE BE?

HOW SHOULD WE KNOW?

WALKING THROUGH THE GRAVEYARD, THEY STOOD IN DEEP TREE SHADES WHERE STONES, ROW ON ROW, WERE OLD AND TIME-ERASED AND LEANING. NO BIRDS SANG. THEY STOPPED BY ONE TOMBSTONE...



HERE, NOW! LOOK AT THIS...

FRESHLY SCRATCHED, AS IF BY FEEBLY FRANTIC, NASTY FINGERS IN THE URETHIAN, MOSS-FLECKED STONE WAS THE NAME: MR. BENEDICT...



GOOD LORD!

LOOK... OVER HERE, THIS ONE TOO... AND THIS ONE AND THIS ONE...

A VILLAGER POINTED TO THE OTHER GRAVESTONES, UPON EACH AND EVERY STONE, SCRATCHED BY FINGER-NAIL SCRATCHINGS, THE SAME MESSAGE APPEARED: MR. BENEDICT...



BUT THAT'S IMPOSSIBLE!

THE TOWN PEOPLE WERE STUNNED...

HE... HE COULDN'T BE BURIED UNDER ALL THESE GRAVESTONES!



THEY STOOD THERE FOR ONE LONG MOMENT. INSTINCTIVELY THEY ALL LOOKED AT ONE ANOTHER NERVOUSLY IN THE SILENCE AND THE TREE DARKNESS. THEY ALL WITCHED FOR AN ANSWER WITH FUMBLING, SENSELESS LIPS. ONE OF THEM REPLIED, SIMPLY:



COULDN'T HE?

WEE, WEE! SO, THAT'S THE *DISH, DRAPE*, HAVE YOU FOUND IT A TASTY TALE. THIS BOY BRADBURY HAD WRITTEN AN IMMORTALITY, WOULDN'T YOU SAY WELL, THAT ABOUT WINDS UP THE GRIFF-KEEPER'S MAG, I'LL JUST POUR SOME BLOOD ON THE FIRE



UNDER MY CHILDREN, LAP UP THE LAST TRACE OF THIS ISSUE'S CULINARY CONCOCTION, AND GET READY FOR MY NEXT HORROR HELPING, WHICH WILL BE IN THE VILLET-KEEPER'S MAG, THE BUILT OF HORROR! 'BYE, NOW'









Scanned by Pontfar, May 2005

FAMOUS 1950s EC COMICS!



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# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING



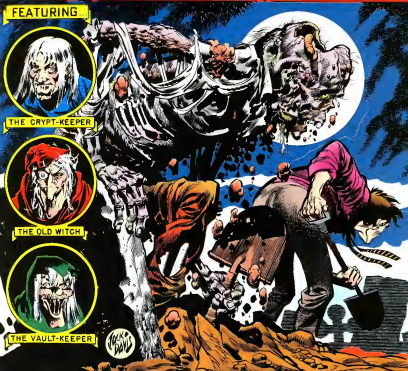
THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



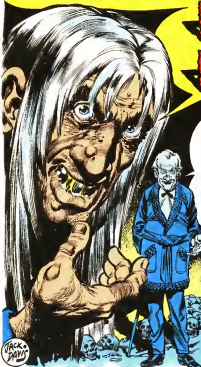
THE VAULT-KEEPER



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! BACK FOR MORE, FIENDISH FANS? WELCOME AGAIN TO THE CRAWLY *CRYPT*. THIS IS YOUR *CRYPT-KEEPER*... YOUR *HOST* IN *HOWLS*, MASTER OF *SCARE-A-MONIES*, AND A-I *TERROR-TALE-TELLER*... READY TO REVEAL ANOTHER REVOLTING RECITATION FROM MY LIBRARY OF *LOATHSOME LITERATURE*. THIS SPINE-TINGLING SCREAM-STORY WILL BE TOLD BY A DR. CARL WINSTON, IN HIS OWN WHIMPERING WORDS. DR. WINSTON... IF YOU PLEASE... GO AHEAD WITH THE YELI-YARN YOU CALL...

## DEAD RIGHT!



JOSEPH FAIRBANKS AND I HAD BEEN LIFE-LONG FRIENDS. WE'D MET IN MEDICAL SCHOOL, AND THROUGH OUR INTERNSHIP AND ON INTO OUR PRACTICING YEARS OUR FRIENDSHIP HAD GROWN. JOSEPH HAD BECOME ONE OF THE NATION'S OUTSTANDING SURGEONS, AND I'D ENJOYED NO SMALL SUCCESS AS A HEART SPECIALIST. NEITHER OF US HAD MARRIED AND CONSEQUENTLY, AS WE'D GROWN OLDER, WE'D SOUGHT EACH OTHER'S COMPANY MORE AND MORE TO FILL THE LONELINESS OF BACHELOR LIFE. WHEN OUR WHILE DAYS HAD PASSED, AND A CONTENTMENT FOR JUST SITTING BY AN OPEN FIRE AND SIPPING BRANDY HAD COME UPON US, WE'D MADE IT A POINT TO VISIT EACH OTHER'S HOMES AT LEAST ONCE A WEEK... USUALLY ON FRIDAY NIGHTS...

GOOD EVENING,  
JOSEPH!

COME IN, CARL. COME  
IN!

SINCE NEITHER JOSEPH NOR I HAD FAMILIES OR CLOSE RELATIVES, IN DEFERENCE TO OUR CLOSE FRIENDSHIP WE HAD ARRANGED OUR WILLS SO THAT WE WERE EACH OTHERS' INHERITORS.

SIT DOWN, CARL! WILL IT BE THE USUAL? BRANDY?

YES, JOSEPH! AH... THE FIRE FEELS GOOD TONIGHT. THIS DAMP WEATHER ALWAYS SETTLES IN MY BONES.



I THINK THAT THE OLDER WE'D GOTTEN, THE MORE CHILDISH WE'D BECOME ABOUT THIS CONTINUOUS DISAGREEMENT OVER JOSEPH'S RIDICULOUS THEORY. WE'D COME TO FIGHT ABOUT IT AS TWO CHILDREN FIGHT OVER WHO'S TO BE 'IT' IN TAG...

BUT ISN'T IT POSSIBLE, CARL, THAT THE SENSORY FUNCTIONS OF THE BODY CAN CONTINUE AFTER WHAT WE PRESUMPTUOUSLY CALL 'DEATH'?

IF THE BRAIN CELLS DIE, SENSORY FUNCTIONS CEASE!



RIDICULOUS? NO! POSSIBLE! VERY POSSIBLE! IN A STATE OF SHOCK, WHERE THE FUNCTIONS OF THE BRAIN CELL WERE CURTAILED, THE LITTLE OXYGEN LEFT IN THE PROTOPLASM AT THE MOMENT OF HEART FAILURE WOULD BE ENOUGH TO PROLONG THE LIFE OF THE GELL FOR HOURS.

SO A DEAD MAN IS NOT REALLY DEAD WHEN HE IS PRONOUNCED DEAD, EH? HE CAN STILL FEEL AND SEE AND HEAR, ALTHOUGH HE CANNOT MOVE...



OF COURSE, JOSEPH AND I HAD HAD OUR DIFFERENCES, TOO, LIKE THAT SILLY THEORY OF HIS THAT HE WOULD UNFAILINGLY BRING UP EVERY TIME WE WERE TOGETHER...

BUT, ACTUALLY, CARL, HOW DO WE KNOW? HOW DO WE KNOW A MAN IS REALLY DEAD? WHO'S TO SAY THAT HE CANNOT HEAR OR SEE OR FEEL WHAT IS GOING ON AROUND HIM?

BECAUSE, MY DEAR JOSEPH, HIS HEART HAS STOPPED! THE BLOOD NO LONGER FLOWS TO HIS BRAIN! THE CELLS DIE FOR LACK OF OXYGEN!



BUT WE KNOW THAT BRAIN CELLS CANNOT LAST FIFTEEN MINUTES WITHOUT OXYGEN!

IN THEIR NORMAL STATE... YES, BUT SUPPOSE THAT AT THE MOMENT OF HEART CESSATION... WHETHER THROUGH BODY INJURY OR SIMPLE FAILURE... SUPPOSE THAT THE BRAIN CELLS GO INTO A STATE OF SHOCK... OF REDUCED METABOLISM...

REDUCED METABOLISM?! SNOCK?! HOW RIDICULOUS!



EXACTLY! THINK OF THE NUMBER OF CORPSES YOU'VE SEEN WHOSE EYES ARE STILL OPEN... WHOSE EYES WE THOUGHTFULLY PRESS CLOSED WITH PENNIES OR WADS OF COTTON UNDER THE LIDS. THINK OF THE HORROR OF HAVING YOUR EYES FORCED SHUT AND HELD SHUT... WHEN YOUR EYES CAN STILL SEE...

JOSEPH! THIS THEORY OF YOURS IS SHEER POPPY-COCK!



THINK OF THE HORROR OF LISTENING TO YOUR BLOOD BEING PUMPED FROM YOUR BODY OF EMBALMING FLUID BEING FORCED IN! THE PAIN! THE EXCRUCIATING PAIN! AND LISTENING TO YOUR OWN FUNERAL CEREMONY... OF FEELING THE CLOSENESS OF THE COFFIN... THE LID SLAMMING SHUT... PERHAPS BEING NAILED!

STOP IT, JOSEPH!

THINK OF FEELING YOURSELF BEING LOWERED INTO THE GRAVE... THE THUMPING OF EARTH BEING SHOVELED DOWN ON TOP OF YOU... AND THEN... ONLY THEN... FADING AND ACTUALLY DYING!

GOOD LORD, JOSEPH, I SHALL LEAVE THIS MINUTE IF YOU PERSIST IN CONTINUING THIS SHOULISH CONVERSATION...

AS I SAID, WE WERE JUST LIKE CHILDREN. I HAD TO THREATEN TO LEAVE IN ORDER TO GET JOSEPH TO STOP HIS NONSENSE. THE REST OF THE EVENING WOULD BE PLEASANT, AND WE'D REMAIN THE BEST OF FRIENDS, BUT LAST NIGHT WAS DIFFERENT. LAST NIGHT WAS VERY DIFFERENT...

SIT DOWN, CARL! WILL IT BE THE USUAL? BRANDY!

YES, JOSEPH! BRANDY WILL BE FINE!

LAST NIGHT WE'D SAT BEFORE THE FIRE, SIPPING OUR BRANDIES, AND JOSEPH DIDN'T ONCE BRING UP HIS RIDICULOUS THEORY. INSTEAD HE TALKED OF INVESTMENTS AND BAD LUCK AND SOME SUCH NONSENSE. I HADN'T PAID MUCH ATTENTION. FACT IS, I'D THOUGHT OF A NEW ARGUMENT AGAINST HIS THEORY AND WAS WAITING, MULLING IT OVER IN MY MIND...

SO YOU SEE, CARL. I'M BANKRUPT!

EH? WHA...? JOSEPH! DID YOU SAY YOU'RE BANKRUPT?

THAT'S RIGHT, CARL. AND I'M BADLY IN DEBT! I NEED MONEY! A GREAT DEAL OF MONEY!

WHY I'LL GLADLY LEND YOU WHAT YOU NEED, JOSEPH!

LEND, CARL? DON'T BE SILLY! I'M TAKING IT! YOUR WHOLE FORTUNE! YOU SEE... I'VE POISONED YOUR BRANDY...

JOSEPH! NO!

I STAGGERED TO MY FEET. I FELT WEAK AND DIZZY AND MY LEGS AND ARMS WERE TINGLING...

DON'T BOTHER TRYING ANY EMETICS, CARL. THE POISON IS A FAST-ACTING ONE. YOU'LL BE DEAD IN A MOMENT.

JOSEPH! HOW COULD YOU...

I WAS HALF-WAY ACROSS THE ROOM WHEN I SIMPLY COLLAPSED TO THE FLOOR. I TRIED TO MOVE. I TRIED TO SPEAK. IT WAS AS THOUGH I WERE COMPLETELY PARALYZED.

GOOD-BYE, CARL.  
THANK YOU FOR THE  
INHERITANCE.



HE CAME AND STOOD OVER ME. I COULD SEE CLEARLY, YET I COULDN'T MOVE MY EYES. THEY WERE GLUED IN THE ONE POSITION. JOSEPH MOVED INTO MY LINE OF VISION AND KNELT BESIDE ME. I FELT HIM LIFT MY LIMP HAND...

NO PULSE. YOU'RE DEAD,  
CARL! STONE DEAD!



DEAD? HOW COULD I BE DEAD? I COULD SEE... I COULD FEEL... I COULD HEAR JOSEPH DIALING THE TELEPHONE...

HELLO, NORTON FUNERAL PARLOR? THAT YOU, BEN? THIS IS DOCTOR JOSEPH FAIRBANKS. YOU'D BETTER GET OVER HERE AND BRING YOUR WICKER...



DOCTOR CARL WINSTON? NO! JUST DIED! YES. AT MY HOUSE? HEART ATTACK... OH, PLEASE. NO!



I HEARD JOSEPH HANG UP. I HEARD HIM APPROACH AND I SAW HIS FACE WHEN HE LEANED OVER ME... HIS LEERING FACE...

POOR CARL! HOW WE USED TO ARGUE... ABOUT SILLY THEORIES... THEORIES THAT I DIDN'T BELIEVE MYSELF!



OH LORD, WHAT HE WAS SAYING TO ME... THINKING I COULDN'T HEAR... KNOWING I WAS DEAD...

BUT I NEVER COULD GET YOU ANGRY ENOUGH, COULD I, CARL? I NEVER COULD GET YOU SO UPSET YOU'D DROP DEAD! NO! I HAD TO POISON YOU TO GET YOUR MONEY... YOUR ESTATE...



THEN, A PAIN... A HORRIBLE EXCRUCIATING PAIN IN MY CHEST... AND JOSEPH GRINNING DOWN AT ME AND BRAGGING...

IT WILL BE SIMPLE, CARL. I'M A PHYSICIAN. I'LL SIGN THE DEATH CERTIFICATE. DEATH... BY NATURAL CAUSES. NO ONE WOULD QUESTION A SURGEON'S WORD... AH. THE BELL! THE UNDERTAKER IS HERE...





BEN NORTON CAME IN LOOKING VERY SAD. JOSEPH'S VOICE CHANGED. NOW, AS HE SPOKE, HE SOUNDED GENUINELY BEREAVED...

IT WAS AWFUL, BEN! ANFUL! ONE MINUTE, SITTING AND DRINKING! THE NEXT MINUTE, DEAD!

HOW'D IT HAPPEN, DOC?

WE WERE ARGUING ABOUT SOMETHING OR OTHER. A MEDICAL THEORY OF MINE. CARL WAS SHOUTING. HE MUST HAVE BECOME TOO EMOTIONALLY UPSET. HIS HEART.

TOO BAD. SUCH A NICE GUY! WELL...I'LL GET HIS BODY ON DOWNTOWN...

I'LL GO WITH YOU, BEN! OH... SINCE I'M THE ONLY ONE IN THE WORLD CARL HAD... NO FAMILY, YOU KNOW... THERE'S NO USE DRAGGING THIS OUT, ARRANGE FOR A SMALL DISGIFIED FUNERAL... TOMORROW...

SURE! WHY WASTE TIME? I GOT A WICKER IN THE TRUCK. C'MON AND HELP ME...



YOU... YOU WHO ARE READING THIS STORY! HOW CAN YOU UNDERSTAND HOW I FELT? HOW CAN YOU KNOW THE HORROR THAT GREPT UP MY RIGID SPINE? I WAS DEAD. DEAD BY ALL STANDARDS. AND YET I COULD FEEL... COULD HEAR... COULD SEE THINGS MOVE AS THEY LIFTED ME AND PLACED ME INTO THE WICKER...

YEP. NICE GUY... THE DOC WAS...

HEAVY THOUGH. HEAVY PEOPLE ARE MORE APT TO SUFFER HEART TROUBLE...



I COULD SEE THEM LOOKING DOWN AT ME. BUT I COULDN'T BLINK... COULDN'T MOVE AN EYELID... COULDN'T LIVE... EVER AGAIN...

LOOK, BEN. HIS EYES...

YEAH. I KNOW. THEY'RE OPEN. ALMOST LIKE HE WAS SEEN' US, EH? WELL...



BEN REACHED DOWN AND I FELT HIS FINGERTIPS TOUCH MY EYELIDS, PUSHING THEM CLOSED. AND NOW I WAS SHROUDED IN THE DARKNESS OF DEATH. BUT I COULD STILL HEAR. I COULD STILL FEEL THEM LIFT THE WICKER AND CARRY ME. I COULD IMAGINE WHAT WAS HAPPENING. THEY WERE PUTTING ME INTO THE BACK OF THE BLACK PANEL TRUCK WITH THE BLACK CURTAINED WINDOWS...

EASY, NOW...

WHY...? HE CAN'T FEEL THE BUMPS...



I COULD HEAR THEM GET IN THE FRONT... HEAR THE ENGINE START... FEEL THE MOTION OF RIDING... RIDING INTO TOWN TO THE FUNERAL PARLOR...

WELL... HERE WE ARE.

HELP ME GET HIM OUT...



I COULD HEAR THE BACK DOORS OPEN AGAIN. I COULD FEEL THE WICKER BEING LIFTED AND CARRIED INTO THE COLD WHITE ROOM WITH THE NEEDLES AND TUBES. I COULD SMELL THE PERFUME THAT TRIED TO HIDE THE FORMALDEHYDE ODOR...



I COULD FEEL MYSELF BEING LIFTED... BEING PLACED ON A COLD SURFACE... A MARBLE TABLE...



I COULD HEAR THE RUSTLING WHISPER OF HOSES, THE SHARP CLINKING OF BOTTLES, THE HUM OF PUMP-MOTORS STARTING...



I FELT WHAT MUST HAVE BEEN A NEEDLE ENTERING MY ARM. BUT THERE WAS NO PAIN. JOSEPH HAD BEEN WRONG. THERE WAS NO PAIN, EVEN AS THE LAST DROP OF BLOOD DRIPPED OUT OF MY BODY AND I HEARD IT GURLING DOWN A DRAIN SOMEWHERE...



ANOTHER PUMP. ANOTHER NEEDLE PRESSING AGAINST MY DEAD FLESH. MORE GURLING...



JOSEPH DIDN'T WANT TO SEE HIS MONEY WASTED. NOT TOO EXPENSIVE. I WANTED TO SCREAM. BUT HOW COULD I? DEAD MEN DON'T SCREAM. THEY ONLY LIE STIFFLY... LISTENING... FEELING... AND CRYING INSIDE...



I WAS BEING LIFTED AGAIN. NOW I COULD FEEL THE SMOOTH SATIN AGAINST MY DEAD HANDS. THE CAMPHOR SMELL OF NEWNESS. I WAS BEING PUT INTO MY GOFFIN...



HOW LONG I LAY THERE I DO NOT KNOW. PERHAPS TIME, TO ONE DEAD, IS IMMEASURABLE. THE LID WAS SLAMMING DOWN...



BEING NAILED...



I WAS BEING MOVED AGAIN. A VOICE... EULOGIZING ME... MY FUNERAL ORATION. I WAS HEARING IT ALL...



A MOTOR. THE COOLNESS OF OPEN AIR. I WAS BEING LOWERED INTO THE GRAVE. THE VOICE...



THE HOLLOW BOON OF DIRT CRASHING DOWN UPON THE COFFIN LID. THE HORROR... THE SCREAMING SILENT HORROR OF IT...



AND NOW, THE SHOVELING HAS STOPPED. THERE IS LAUGHTER AND VOICES...



THE LID IS CREAKING OPEN. A RUSH OF FRESH AIR CARRESSES MY FACE...



A FINGER TOUCHES MY EYES. THE NIGHT STARS TWINKLE DOWN AT ME. JOSEPH'S FACE CUTS ACROSS THEM, BLOCKING THEM OUT...



YOU'RE PARALYZED, CARL. YOU'RE NOT REALLY DEAD. IT'S A NEW TYPE ANAESTHETIC! I PUT IT INTO YOUR BRANDY!

JOSEPH GRINS AT ME. BEN NORTON IS BESIDE HIM...



WE STAGED THIS, CARL... BEN AND I, TOGETHER! YOU'RE IN THE GARDEN OUT IN BACK OF MY HOUSE...

IT ISN'T MORNING YET, CARL!

THE DRUG WILL BE WEARING OFF SOON...



WE DIDN'T EVEN GO TO THE FUNERAL PARLOR! I JUST DROVE YOU AROUND!

THEN WE BROUGHT YOU BACK TO THE HOUSE... INTO MY OFFICE. WE PRETENDED IT WAS THE FUNERAL PARLOR...



I LENT OGG FAIRBANKS A FEW OF MY PUMPS FOR SOUND EFFECTS... AND THIS COFFIN...

IT WAS A GAG, CARL. I WANTED TO SHOW YOU THAT MY THEORY COULD BE RIGHT! YOU ALMOST BELIEVED IT, DIDN'T YOU CARL? DIDN'T YOU?



DOC. IT'S FIVE-THIRTY! SHOULDN'T HE BE COMING OUT OF IT?

IT'S MORNING NOW. THE STARS HAVE GONE AND I FEEL THE SUN ON MY FACE. JOSEPH IS PLEADING WITH ME... TEARS IN HIS EYES. BEN NORTON'S FACE JUST GETS PALER AND PALER...



CARL! FOR GOD'S SAKE, CARL! COME OUT OF IT! IT'S A GAG, CARL... COME OUT OF IT... PLEASE...

OH, LORD HELP US...

POOR JOSEPH AND HIS THEORY. HE WANTED SO MUCH FOR ME TO ACCEPT IT. AND NOW I HAVE ACCEPTED IT! ONLY HE WON'T KNOW HE'S RIGHT! NOT UNTIL HE GOES THROUGH WHAT I'VE GONE THROUGH. FOR I AM DEAD. I DIED OF A HEART ATTACK JUST BEFORE THE UNDERTAKER GAME!

HEH, HEH! SO NEXT TIME YOU MEET A CORPSE, KIDDIES, BE CAREFUL WHAT YOU SAY, EH? YOU MIGHT HURT ITS NON-FEELINGS. AND NOW THAT YOU'VE FINISHED TELLING US YOUR LITTLE TALE, CARL, YOU CAN GO CRAWL BACK INTO YOUR COFFIN AGAIN AND I'LL TUCK YOU IN WITH A BLANKET OF GRAVE-GRAVEL. WHILE I'M SHOVELING, FIENDS, WHY DON'T YOU SHOVEL ALONG TO THE VAULT-KEEPER WHO, BREATHLESSLY AND DRIPPING CROOL, WAITS WITH HIS GUEST-SPOT GORE-TALE, COMPLETE WITH GUARANTEED ACCOMPANYING NIGHTMARE. I'LL DIG YOU LATER!



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HID, HIEN! WELCOME TO THE VAULT OF HORROR, HIDIOTS. THIS IS YOUR SCREAM-STORY-SPINNER, THE VAULT-KEEPER, WAITING TO NARRATE ANOTHER NAUSEATING TALE FROM MY GREEPS-COLLECTION. SO COME IN, SIT DOWN, AND I'LL BEGIN. THIS WILL BE A NEW EXPERIENCE FOR YOU... SO RELAX AND BECOME THE MAIN CHARACTER IN A STORY THAT ACTUALLY HAPPENS TO YOU. I CALL THIS YELP-YARN...

## PLEASANT SCREAMS!

IT IS AS IF YOU WERE SUDDENLY MOLDED OUT OF SILENCE AND INFINITE BLACKNESS AND YOU ARE NOW STANDING IN A STORMSWEEP FOREST, FEELING THE WIND ON YOUR FACE AND HEARING THE SIGHING TREES BENDING UNDER ITS ON-SLAUGHT. YOU CANNOT REMEMBER ANYTHING BEFORE THIS MOMENT. THE PAST IS A VOID WITHOUT MEMORIES OR RECOLLECTIONS, AND YOU KNOW ONLY THAT YOUR NAME IS FELIX PURDY AND THAT YOU ARE AFRAID...



THERE IS A CRAWLING FEAR IN YOU, FELIX PURDY. YOU STAND BELOW THE TOWERING WINDSWEEP TREES AND THE CLOUDS ABOVE LOOM LIKE MYSTERIOUS GHOST-SHAPES THAT HURRY BY BELOW A COLD MOON. YOUR HANDS TREMBLE AND YOUR BLOOD RUNS COLD AND YOUR HEART THROBS WILDLY IN YOUR CHEST. AND THEN YOU HEAR THE INHUMAN HOWL...



SHEER TERROR ROOTS YOU TO THE SPOT AND YOU SWAY LIKE THE TREES THAT SURROUND YOU...WAITING... LISTENING... AS THE HOWLING THING COMES CLOSER... AND THEN IT BURSTS FROM THE BLACK OVERGROWTH, AND THE GHOST-CLOUDS PART SO THAT THE COLD MOON ILLUMINATES IT...



AND NOW YOU'RE RUNNING, FELIX, AND SCREAMING, AND THE INHUMAN WOLF-THING IS LOPING AFTER YOU, FANGS BARED AND SPITTLE DROOLING FROM ITS FLAME-RED MOUTH...



YOU RUN TILL YOUR HEART IS A HAMMER SLAMMING INSIDE YOUR CHEST, NOW YOU CAN FEEL THE HOT FOUL BREATH OF THE WEREWOLF CLOSE BEHIND YOU...



SUDDENLY YOUR LEGS ARE RUBBER COLLAPSING BENEATH YOU AND YOU SPRAWL ON THE GROUND. THE WEREWOLF IS OVER YOU, ITS BLAZING EYES STARING DOWN, A LOW TRIUMPHANT GROWL, ERUPTING FROM ITS HEAVING CHEST. IT HESITATES, WAITING WHILE YOU SCREAM AND COWER BEHIND UPRAISED PROTECTING ARMS...



AND THEN IT SPRINGS UPON YOU, AND ITS RAZOR-SHARP CLAWS ARE TEARING AT YOUR FLESH AND ITS KNIFE-LIKE FANGS ARE SINKING INTO YOUR BODY AND PULLING AND RIPPING AND SLASHING...



SUDDENLY THERE IS BLACKNESS AROUND YOU, ENDING THE PAIN, ENDING THE HORROR, AND THEN THE BLACKNESS FADES AND YOU ARE STANDING IN AN ALLEYWAY BETWEEN TALL BUILDINGS WITH BOARDED WINDOWS AND LOCKED DOORS AND YOU ARE AFRAID AGAIN...



YOU KNOW YOU ARE FELIX PURDY AND YOU KNOW YOU ARE A HIGH-SCHOOL TEACHER, BUT YOU CANNOT REMEMBER ANYTHING OF YOUR PAST... YOUR CHILDHOOD... LAST YEAR... LAST MONTH, YOU'VE SUDDENLY FOUND YOURSELF... AND YOU ARE YOU, AND THERE IS NO YESTERDAY... AND NOW YOU ARE IN AN ALLEY... AND FOOTSTEPS APPROACH...



A SHADOW LEAPS ACROSS THE GAPING ENTRANCE TO THE ALLEY. YOU COWER BACK INTO THE GLOOM. IT PEERS IN, ITS SLANTED EYES GLOWING, ITS NEEDLE-LIKE FANGS GLITTERING...



A... VAMPIRE...

A BREEZE STIRS, RUSTLING PAPERS ON A TRASH PILE BEHIND YOU, SPINNING UP THE ALLEYWAY, CARRYING YOUR SCENT TO THE VAMPIRE'S SENSITIVE NOSTRILS. IT LIFTS ITS ARMS AND THE BLACK CAPE DRAPES FROM THEM LIKE BAT-WINGS AND THERE IS A DULL BEATING SOUND AS IT SEEMS TO GLIDE TOWARD YOU...



NO! OH, GOD... NO!

FOR A MOMENT YOU STAND GRINING, FLATTENED AGAINST THE BUILDING WALL LIKE A YELLOWED POSTER, WATCHING IN MORBID FASCINATION AS THE BLOOD-HUNGRY BEAST MOVES TOWARD YOU...



K-K-KEEP AWAY...

AND THEN HORROR STRIKES AT YOU, SENDING YOU FLAILING DOWN THE ALLEY... DOWN INTO THE SHADOWS... RUNNING FROM THE HIDEOUS THING BEHIND YOU...



HELP ME! OH, LORD... HELP...

THE BOARD FENCE IS HIGH AND FLAT AND EXPRESSIONLESS. YOU FALL AGAINST IT SOBING. IT'S A BLIND ALLEY, AND YOU ARE TRAPPED... AND THE BEATING SOUND IS BEHIND YOU. YOU SINK TO YOUR KNEES...



WHAT DID I DO? WHAT DID I DO TO DESERVE THIS... SOB... THIS TORTURE...

AND NOW THE VAMPIRE IS BENDING OVER YOU AND YOU CAN FEEL ITS NEEDLE-FANGS SINKING DEEP INTO YOUR THROAT AND ITS DRY LIPS SUCKING AROUND THE WOUNDS, DRAWING IN THE RED LIFE-FLUID IT CRAVES...



EEEEEEEE... GGGH...

NOW EVERYTHING IS FADING AND THERE IS DARKNESS AGAIN AND YOU ARE STANDING IN A GRAVEYARD AND YOUR EYES ARE FILLED WITH TEARS. YOU ARE FELIX PURDY, SCHOOL TEACHER, WITH NO YESTERDAY AND NO TOMORROW, AND ONLY THE HORROR OF THE PRESENT TO LIVE FOR...



WHY? WHY ALL THIS? WHAT DOES IT MEAN? WHY MUST I SUFFER LIKE THIS?

THE GRAVEYARD ECHOES WITH THE SILENCE OF DEATH AND THE TOMBSTONES ARE BLANK FACES THAT DO NOT SMILE OR CRY OR SHOW PITY FOR YOU. THE MOUNDS ARE HEAPED HIGH OVER THE LATE AND DEPARTED AND THEIR GRASS IS YELLOWED FROM WINTER'S CHILL. YOU STAND AND WAIT, HALF-EXPECTING, HALF-KNOWING.



YOUR EYES BORE INTO THE DARKNESS AND YOU SEE THE ROTTING FOUL-SMELLING CORPSE STUMBLING TOWARD YOU. YOU GRIT YOUR TEETH, FIGHTING OFF THE REVULSION THAT SWEEPS OVER YOU...



BUT YOUR LIFE DOES NOT FADE. ONLY THE SCENE FADES ONCE MORE, AND YOU STILL EXIST. THE BLACKNESS DESCENDS LIKE A CURTAIN AND LIFTS, AND THE GUILLOTINE RISES INTO THE MOONLIGHT...



YOU ARE FELIX PUROY, HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER. YOU ARE RESIGNED TO YOUR ROLE IN THIS GORY MATINEE. YOU WALK TO THE GUILLOTINE-STEPS AS IF YOU HAVE REHEARSED THIS ACTION WELL...



AND THEN YOU HEAR THE DRAGGING SOUND... THE SOUND OF FEET LONG DEAD AND DECOMPOSED AND CRAWLING WITH DECAY AND THE SLIME OF THE GRAVE. YOU HEAR THE DRAGGING FOOTSTEPS IN THE CHILL OF THE NIGHT, MOVING SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, UPON THE MOUNDS AND AROUND THE GRAVE MARKERS AND OVER THE DRY GRASS. AND YOU WAIT...



AND NOW THE THING IS UPON YOU AND ITS COOR SEARS YOUR NOSTRILS AND YOUR STOMACH HEAVES AND YOU HOLD YOUR BREATH SO AS NOT TO SUCK THE FETID STENCH INTO YOUR LUNGS. YOU FEEL THE PUTRID ARMS AROUND YOU AND THE MOLDY FLESH FALLING AWAY AND THE BONE FINGERS CRUSHING THE LIFE FROM YOU...



YOU LOOK UP AT THE GLEAMING BLADE HANGING BETWEEN THE TRACKS THAT CLIMB TOWARD THE STARLESS SKY. YOU KNEEL... RESIGNED...





YOU PLACE YOUR HEAD IN THE HOLLOWED KNIFE-BED AND YOU STARE DOWN AT THE WOVEN BASKET WAITING PATIENTLY TO RECEIVE ITS DUE. YOU HEAR THE BLADE SQUEELED DOWNWARD AND AN INVOLUNTARY CRY ESCAPES YOUR QUIVERING LIPS.



AND NOW YOU ARE BEHIND THE BLACK CURTAIN AGAIN, WAITING FOR THE NEXT TORTUROUS SCENE TO BE UNVEILED. YOU FLOAT IN A SEA OF DARKNESS...CRYING, WAITING, SPINNING...



AND YET, YOU SEEM TO RECALL A ROOM...LONG AGO...FAR AWAY... A ROOM WITH WHITE LEERING FACES... LITTLE MONSTERS...AND A LITTLE EVIL THING THAT SAT AND STARED AT YOU AND... AND... BUT IT IS ONLY A FAINT RECOLLECTION...AS THOUGH IT NEVER REALLY EXISTED...



AND NOW THE CURTAIN IS LIFTING AND THE SEA OF DARKNESS IS RECEDING AND YOU ARE STANDING IN AN OPEN FIELD WITH FOG CLINGING TO THE HOLLOW PLACES, AND THERE IS A GIGGLING. FACES... WHITE, LEERING FACES... SURROUND YOU...



AND THEN YOU SEE THE YAWNING PIT BEHIND THEM AND YOU SEE THE SHOVELS IN THEIR HANDS AND THEY CLOSE IN ON YOU...GIGGLING...



LITTLE CLAWING HANDS SEIZE YOU, PUSH YOU, AND YOU STIFFEN. BUT THERE ARE MANY HANDS AND YOU SKID TOWARD THE GAPING HOLE...SO LONG...SO NARROW... SO DEEP...



NOW YOUR FEET ARE AT THE PIT-EDGE, SLIDING. THE DIRT CHATTERS AS IT DROPS IN, AND THE MANY HANDS PUSH, AND YOU ARE FALLING... FALLING...



YOU LIE IN THE MOIST COLD EARTH AT THE BOTTOM OF THE HOLE AND YOU LOOK UP AT THEIR GRIMING FACES. THEN, YOU HEAR THE CRUNCHING SOUND AS A SPACE DIGG INTO THE MOUNDEO SOIL BESIDE THE EXCAVATION...



THE DIRT CRASHES DOWN ON YOU, AND THE GIGGLING GROWS LOUDER. SPACES FLY... EARTH FALLS, YOU SCREAM... AND THE LAUGHTER SCREAMS BACK AT YOU...



YOU ARE FELIX PURDY, HIGH SCHOOL TEACHER, FLOATING IN DARKNESS, LISTENING TO LAUGHTER... ENTHUSIASTIC, EFFERVESCENT LAUGHTER, YOUNG LAUGHTER. THE LAUGHTER OF...



YOU ARE FELIX PURDY... WITH NO PAST AND NO FUTURE... A CREATURE BORN OF NOW... BORN TO SUFFER... TO DIE A MILLION TIMES IN ONE BRIEF SPAN OF EXISTENCE. AND SOMEWHERE, REALITY IS LAUGHING AT YOU...



YOU HAVE DIED MANY TIMES IN THIS, YOUR BRIEF LIFE-SPAN, FELIX PURDY. YOU HAVE DIED IN MANY HORRIBLE VICIOUS WAYS. BUT NOW YOU KNOW...



YES, FELIX PURDY SOMEWHERE, REALITY IS LAUGHING AT YOU. THE REALITY THAT SURROUNDS YOUR CREATOR...



AND THE LAUGHTER IS DESTROYING YOU, FELIX. EVEN NOW YOU CAN FEEL YOURSELF FADING...



FOR THIS, THEN, IS YOUR **REAL DEATH**, FELIX. THIS THEN IS **THE HORROR OF ALL THE HORRORS...** MORE **HORRIBLE** THAN YOUR DREAMER HAS CONCEIVED IN ANY OF HIS WILD WISH-DREAMS. IN A **MOMENT**, **SLEEP WILL VANISH**, AND **SO WILL YOU...**

NO! WAIT! SLEEP SOME MORE! DON'T LISTEN TO THEM! WAIT...



NOW YOU ARE GONE, FELIX PURDY. YOU EXIST NO LONGER. NOW YOU ARE **REALLY DEAD**. YOU HEAR NO MORE LAUGHTER. DAYLIGHT HAS BLANCHED YOU AWAY. BUT THE **DREAMER** HEARS THE LAUGHTER...

HUH?



A BOY. A BOY LIFTS HIS HEAD FROM HIS HIGH-SCHOOL DESK AND RUBS HIS EYES, SLEEPILY. HIS CLASSMATES SURROUND HIM...

GOLLY...

HAVE A NICE NAP, YOUNG MAN?



THE BOY LOOKS AROUND. HIS TEACHER STANDS OVER HIM, FUMING...

I. I'M SORRY, SIR!

YOU SHOULD BE. YOU HAVEN'T EVEN **TOUGHED** YOUR EXAM PAPER... AND THE PERIOD IS **OVER!**



THE BOY GRINS SLEEPILY. THE TEACHER DEFTLY APPLIES A RED PENCIL TO THE BARE EXAMINATION PAPER, SWINGING IT IN A LARGE CIRCLE...

ZERO FOR YOU, YOUNG MAN! I HOPE YOUR LITTLE NAP WAS WORTH IT!

YES...MR. PUROY!



BUT IT IS TOO LATE, FELIX PURDY. THE LAUGHTER IS LOUD. THE DREAMER STIRS. THERE IS A BLINDING LIGHT THAT IS LIKE WHITE-HOT LIQUID METAL, CASCADING AT YOU AND DISSOLVING YOU IN ITS BRILLIANCE...

EEEEAAAGHH...



HEH, HEH! SO NOW YOU KNOW HOW IT **FEELS** TO BE THE **MAIN CHARACTER** IN A **DREAM**, EH, FRIENDS? A **CHARACTER** THAT YOUR **DREAMER** PARTICULARLY **DISLIKES**... HEH, HEH... LIKE HIS **MATH TEACHER**... OR IS IT **LATIN**, OR MAYBE **ENGLISH**, IN YOUR CASE? WELL, THAT'S MY TALE FOR THIS ISSUE OF

C.K.'S MAG. I'LL DREAM UP ANOTHER NIGHTMARE WHEN NEXT WE MEET. NOW, C.K. AWAKES, SO I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO HIM. G'NIGHT! PLEASANT... HEH... HEH... DREAMS?





# HEH, HEH! YEP! IT'S ... THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Ruah Cochran

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I watch your show on HBO. And I buy your comics. I have also seen both your movies (DEMON, BORDELLO). I love the story in CRYPT 20 "How Green Was My Alley". Please print my address and could you send me some CRYPT stuff? Your #1 fan,

Petro (Coffin-Keeper) Boucouvalos II 35 School ST  
Saco, ME 04072

I was wondering if you could send me some drawings (like the wax exhibits in the story "The Works in Wax"). If you can I would appreciate it. Thank you,

Darren Toland Claysville, PA

Freebies, freebies, freebies! Nobody ever went broke underestimating the taste of the public, and nobody ever got rich giving freebies! —CK

I'm a big fan of everything of yours, your action figures, comics, movies, everything. I was wondering if you could tell me where I could get your comics, movies, and toys, in Phoenix or Payson, AZ. Your big fan,

Joey Kellogg Payson, AZ

How come you don't have a fan club? There are a lot of toys and collectibles that I missed in stores, is there any sick-twisted way you could come out with a catalog?

Are you and Elvira ever going to make a movie? I love everything you do or make! Please print address.

Alex Harrow 1455 SW Sexton MTN DR #7E  
Beverton, OR 97008

Now, here are boys ready to take part in a market economy! We'll rely on our readers to tell us about Arizona comics shops, but we offer many EC items (mostly 2D) by mail order ourselves. Writer for details.

Closest I've got to a fan club is the EC fanzine HORROR FROM THE CRYPT OF FEAR; issue 9 is still available for \$10 from Bill Leach, 203 Bemeur DR, Pittsburg, CA 94565. He has other goodies, too! —CK

I am one of your ghoulish fans! I can't stop reading your terror-best comics and videos! They rule!!!! Keep up your witchy work! Your Ghoulish Murder,

Freddy Kruger Elm ST, USA

Hi! My name is Shauna. Most people call me "Crypt" because all I do is talk about you! I've seen every single show you've made. I also have seen and still see your new show "Secrets of the Crypt-Keeper's Haunted House." I love horror

My brother hates you. He says he's sick and tired of watching your show and hearing my laugh (oh I know how to laugh your laugh!). My Mom likes you too. We've watched both your movies DEMON NIGHT and BORDELLO OF BLOOD. They were great! Please print my address. Frightfully yours,

"Crypty" 2144 S 15th ST  
Shauna Van Elss Philadelphia, PA 19145

What use are brothers, anyway (not counting target practice)? —CK

When I was a child in the fifties—after the comic book code had banished CRYPT and other EC publications—a few of us had issues of the magazine handed down to us by our older siblings. These were cherished archival possessions.

Imagine my delight to find issue #19! It was a wonderful nostalgic trip back to my early childhood. After forty years I still vividly remembered those stories and hoped that I'd be able to read them again some day. Thanks for the mummies! —CK

Richard H. Bush Meriden, CT

And burning lips and burning ships and burning toast and prunes. —CK

It's me again, The Zombie Master. I would just like to ask if on VAULT 32, your #21, is the guy on the front going to have the meat cleaver hanging in his head. Also, I think that the rule for sending in your real name and address really bits some big. Also my friend and me draw our own Horror Comics. My friend draws just as good as the drawers for EC. (Print my address)

The Zombie Master 114 Howard AV  
Arnold, MD 21012

If that Vapid Vault-Keeper doesn't chicken out, you'll see that cover uncovered next month. But did you know MY next issue will receive its first uncensored showing just 3 short months from now? —CK

After reading the first 19 issues of CRYPT and the other EC horror titles, I began to wonder if they hadn't been so bad after all, that maybe all the criticism they received in the prudish 50s was unwarranted. Thus, I had been providing my children with inexpensive 64-page reprints (after careful screening, of course). Then I got CRYPT 20 and read Gashly's horrifying "The Handler." WOW!

At last I had found material so objectionable that there's no way in HELL I'll let my kids see it until they're 18! None of us want to think about what a mortician might do to us when our time comes to be prepared for our crypt, but

this story sure fuels our worst fears! The scene that was the nail in the coffin is what was done to the old maid ("Hands end things" ...EWWWWW!) Naturally, I loved the story. Keep up the good work on the reprints, and thanks for the chills

Donald P. Deaton

Fort Wayne, IN

PS) To all of you underage readers out there: Close this comic IMMEDIATELY and take it to the nearest adult for review and potential censorship (They're not paying attention, are they? Well, I hope it scares the living CRAP out of them.)

Just like to keep you on your toes!

-CK

I happen to be a big fan of yours. I would first off like to say Johnny Craig is the best EC Comic artist. Your comics keep me entertained and I am going to subscribe. I also want to say your story in VAULT 18 ("Let's Play Poison") was the best. I would like to list my 5 favorite stories from your bone chilling collection:

5) "The Maestro's Hand", 4) "Ghost Ship", 3) "Let's Play Poison", 2) "The Hungry Grave", 1) "A Mute Witness To Murder!"

This summer I'm to work up at camp. I'll make sure to have an EC comic book in my hand.

John Aiken

Centerville, VA

Especially during latrine breaks!

-CK

Your stories are the best. I love your TV shows and movies. I was wondering if you could send me one of your best horror stories, maybe the ones about vampires or zombies. Your bloodsucking tale,

John Farren

Austin, TX

My name is David Harle and I really enjoy reading your comics, and collecting them. CRYPT 19 was brilliant, a real horror issue.

"Midnight Mess!" was my fav story, the artwork was class. One thing, though: Page 2, panel 7, when Harold was seated in the restaurant why didn't the vampire waiter notice that Harold has a reflection, or Harold notice that the waiter has no reflection, in the mirror? Was the man sitting at the table a vampire, 'cos he had a reflection? Send some free comics. Please print my address. I want to hear from other EC fans. ECing you,

David Harle  
5 Shannon Tie

South Circular Road  
Limerick, IRELAND

In the daytime, the restaurant was all nonvampire; at night, vice-versa! The landlord collected double-rent (the lousy bloodsucker)! TANSTAAFCI (There ain't no such thing as a free comic!) -CK

You're genial. You're perfect. I love your comics and of course I love you, too. I'm sorry that my english sucks but I'm a 15 years young girl from Germany.

I'm one of your greatest fan (stiker). I think you looks very nice. I've got three questions to you. Do you teal real Love? Can I have an autograph from you or something like that? (Please.) Do you like all your fans? (I think the first question sounds silly, but this is serious.)

And I think your friends (Sorry: fiends) looks not very clever, too. But all your friends are my friends (fiends).

Hey, CK! Can I talk with you a while? Eh, you're the only one with whom I can talk about my problems. My school sucks, and my parents suck, too. Sometimes I feel like a loser.

And sometimes I think there is no normal human on the earth, too. Oh, what can I do? The people in my village tease me every day. And tell lies about me. I feel so unhappy. Oh, eh, I think I get on your nerves with my long letter, don't I? OK, I say Good Bye!

Stefanie Muller

Bad Endbach, GERMANY

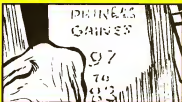
Although the enomynous editor fixed a few words in your letter, he left most of it intact to share the charm of your nescent English. I'm continually amazed by my foreign readers' English skills! (I know a little Spanish: "Dos cafes, to vamoos!")

I really love all my fans. I will consider buying a pencil, so I can do autographs. How do you spell "CK"? -CK

In CRYPT 20, "The Handler" (last story), page 3, panel 7, there's a gravestone with the inscription "In Memory of \_\_\_\_\_ Ganes \_\_\_\_\_ 97 to \_\_\_\_\_". What is the first name, it looks like it starts with the letter "p"? The date of birth must be 1897 and the only number in the date of death that I can clearly read is the last number which appears to be a 3. I know that Bill's father Max died in the late 1940s in a boating accident and his mother was alive when the artwork was done. Who can shed light on this? Puzzled,

David Dellano

Kensington, CT



Perhaps this photomicrograph will shed some light, and likely cause you to rethink your conclusions. A hint: see WEIRD SCIENCE 21, available now! -CK

I love your mag! It's so cool. I always go on the net and look for your web site. But the bad news is that issue 19 was my first mag. Can I have the mags 16 and 15? I promise if I get them I'll get all the mags you make. I'll buy back issues, too. Put my address down because I want a pen pal.

Matt Laney

428 Sunset RD  
Skillman, NJ 08558

#### ATTENTION: CHARLES DRAGOO!

I am writing concerning Charles Drago who wrote in #19. I am a comic book artist who would like to illustrate CELLAR DWELLER. I am 13 years old. I've made 10 comic books, 3 of them horror books. I have collaborated with a writer on one of them: PSYCHO BILLY. Please print my address! I would like to get in contact with Charles Drago very much.

Brian Dishon

19102 Matthew CIR  
Huntington Beach, CA 92646

The stories [in CRYPT 19] offered a thought provoking progression family tree of undead: brother werewolf, sister vampire, voodooed wife, and, of course, a mummy (no relation to the scheming archeologists)!

This issue was originally available Apr/May 1953. When did MAD first use its "Humor in a Jugular Vein" motto? Is it fair to say that this was inspired by the scene where the hero of "Midnight Mess!" got tapped out in the vampire restaurant?

In "This Wraps It Up!", Professor Thomas Steel's patronym should have been Steel!

Issue 20. After perusing the verbose initial title, "Fare Tonight, Followed by Increasing Clottiness.", I debated weather or not to proceed. Fog goodness sake, I'm glad I did.

In "Curiosity Killed.", the evidence was destroyed a smidgen per pigeon in "How Green Was My Alley", it was good to see a left-hander in action. Amy putting.

Was naming the protagonist Mr. Benedict in "The Handler" a reference to Benedict Arnold? As an honored and trusted Revolutionary War colonel, his betrayal became thereby more heinous. Similarly with Satan, who was once the highest-ranking angel. Please print address.

Bob Gorby 13153 Sunny LN  
Cermano, CA 93012

MAD #1 was released in October, 1952, but who says life is fair?  
-CK

Ah! My new CRYPT just arrived and I must say, you didn't disappoint. Firstly, I would like to address some of the very kind people who mentioned me: The Crazy Corpse, Grizley Reaper, and most of all, Jessica Meador, to whom I dedicate this letter. Thank you for your support.

I personally don't think that either the Dark Demon or Blue Demon is Robert Borruso. Philip Smith, maybe, but not Borruso. Borruso had some interesting things to say, while Smith was just rather uptight about everything, going on incessantly about who CRYPT's No. 1 fan is, as if the fate of the world depended upon it. Robert Borruso's not like that.

Grave Digger, don't bother with the Demons. They're not worth the time or effort. By the way, I agree, "Horror We? How's Bayou?" was a wonderfully-drawn tale.

And so, on to the contents of [#19]:

"By The Fright Of The Silvery Moon!" Excellent, one of the ultimate classics. The cover depiction was absolutely stunning. "Midnight Mess!" The best story in the book, or at least I thought so. Perhaps, being a hardcore vampire addict, I'm biased. "Busted Marriage!" Sorry, not into the voodoo thing. Too many voodoo stories in the early issues. They do become rather tiresome. "This Wraps It Up!" This story was at least better than its title. It was better than I expected.

I'm shocked, astounded, and aghast and not in a good way, either! In CRYPT 20, which I received not five minutes ago, I see that you have printed my address as "Rockville, IL." I do not now live, nor have I ever lived, in Illinois (though it's a nice place to visit). My address is still RR 4 Box 141, Rockville IN 47872 and shall be for several years to come. Please rectify this error and hopefully, we can put this all behind us.

Now to address some other matters. Firstly, I would like to say to Grave Digger that there are no hard feelings. I've never been one to hold a grudge, especially against a person who is big enough to apologize. As of the time of this printing, Grave Digger, you have probably already received a letter from me stating this, but I would just like everyone else to now that there is peace between us.

As for the stories, "Fare Tonight" was excellent. I see your mag was plugged on pages two and seven. "How Green Was My Alley" was brilliant, the best story in the entire mag. Not to be outdone, Bradbury's "The Handler" was ingenious, as are all of his works. Ingels did a nice job on the artwork.

In closing, I say this: Buy "CRYPT: THE OFFICIAL ARCHIVES" It's worth its weight in plasma. Gravely yours,  
Myron James Rockville, IN

I miss Philip Smith, and hope he'll write again. Is the correct response to perceived uprightness more uprightness? I say nay!  
-CK

## NEXT ISSUE



Also available this month are WEIRD SCIENCE and PANIC! Watch for KNUIT, WEIRD FANTASY and TWO-FISTED next month. Don't forget HAUNT, FRONTLINE COMBAT and CRIME! Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this comic)!

BACK ISSUES: CRYPT #1, SOLD OUT; FRONT #1-4, \$2 each, all others up thru issue #3, \$1.50 each, CRYPT, W SCI & SHOCK #4-18, and KNUIT, W FAN, 2FIST, HAUNT and CRIME #4-15, \$2 each. All others, \$2.50 each. Sublet issues CRYPT and W SCI are up to 21, KNUIT, W FAN, 2FIST, HAUNT & CRIME are up to 20, FRONT to 9 and PANIC to 3).

Don't forget the entire 11-issue run of WEIRD SCIENCE-FANTASY/INCREDIBLE SCIENCE FICTION (#1-3, \$1.50 each; #4-11, \$2 each) and the 18 issues of SHOCK SUSPENSION (#1-3, \$1.50 each; #4-15, \$2.00 each; #16-18, \$2.50 each)!

Add \$5 per order (\$10 outside US) for S&H.

Write to:  
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GEMSTONE  
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## THIS COMIC REPRINTS

TALES FROM THE CRYPT #37\* (#21, AUG/SEP 1953)

COVER by Jack Davis

"Dead Right!"

Jack Davis

"Reasant Screams!"

Joe Orlando

"Strop! You're Killing Me!"

Bill Elder

"The Rover Boys!"

Graham Ingels

We welcome letters of correction. We cannot promise to acknowledge, publish or answer letters. We edit for clarity, economy and length. We automatically withhold names and zip code unless you clearly state you wish them published. Periodicals may be used if you provide us with your accurate name and address. We attempt to acknowledge publication of letters. To do so we need your address on the topmost letter.

HERE'S A TERROR TIDBIT TO WHET  
YOUR DULLED FIENDISH APPETITES.

# STROP! YOU'RE KILLING ME!

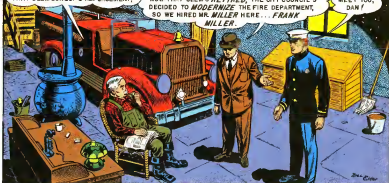


OLD DAN HARPER WAS SITTING IN HIS USUAL WICKER ARM-CHAIR READING HIS USUAL DAILY PAPER AND SMOKING HIS USUAL CORN-COB PIPE WHEN THEY CAME INTO THE LYNDALE FIRE-HOUSE. HE LOOKED UP FROM HIS PAPER TO SEE GRIM-FACED MAYOR WITTER AND THE STRANGER IN THE BLUE UNIFORM WITH THE GOLD BUTTONS AND THE DAZZLING WHITE CAP...

AFTERNOON, MAYOR WITTER, IS  
THAT CLEM DUNLOP'S REPLACEMENT?

NOT EXACTLY, DAN. THIS IS LYNDALE'S NEW FIRE CHIEF!  
NOW THAT CLEM'S RETIRED, THE CITY COUNCIL'S  
DECIDED TO MODERNIZE THE FIRE DEPARTMENT,  
SO WE HIRED MR. MILLER HERE... FRANK  
MILLER.

GLAD TO  
MEET YOU,  
DAN!



OLD DAN COULDN'T BELIEVE HIS EARS. FOR SEVEN-TEEN YEARS, HE AND CLEM DUNLOP HAD COMPRISED LYNDALE'S TWO-MAN FIRE DEPARTMENT. NOW THAT CLEM HAD RETIRED, OLD DAN HAD EXPECTED THE TOWN FATHERS TO HIRE A REPLACEMENT FOR HIM, BUT HE'D NEVER EXPECTED THEM TO HIRE SOMEONE WHO'D BE OLD DAN'S SUPERIOR...

NEW FIRE-CHIEF!  
BUT... I DON'T  
UNDERSTAND!  
I'M SENIOR  
MEMBER NOW!

TIMES HAVE CHANGED, DAN.  
METHODS OF FIGHTING FIRES  
HAVE CHANGED TOO! CHIEF MILLER  
WILL BE IN FULL CHARGE FROM  
NOW ON. WHAT HE SAYS GOES!  
I'M... SORRY...



MAYOR WITTER TURNED TO CHIEF MILLER, SMILING...

WELL, SIR, THIS IS IT. LET ME  
SAY THAT ANY IMPROVEMENTS  
YOU WISH TO MAKE, THE COUNCIL  
WILL GLADLY CONSIDER.  
I HAVE TO GET BACK TO MY  
DESK, SO...

OF COURSE, MAYOR  
WITTER.  
GOOD AFTER-  
NOON.

AFTER-  
NOON,  
MAYOR.



MAYOR WITTER LEFT AND LYNDAL'S NEW FIRE CHIEF LOOKED AROUND...

HMMMM WELL, DAN, WE'VE GOT A LOT OF WORK TO DO, SO LET'S GET MOVING...

WORK? WHAT KIND OF WORK?



CHIEF MILLER WAVED HIS HAND AT THE OLD FIRE-ENGINE.

FIRST OF ALL, WE'RE GOING TO PAINT AND POLISH THAT OLD ENGINE TILL SHE SPARKLES. IT'S IN TERRIBLE CONDITION! LOOK AT 'ER!

PAINT 'ER? POLISH 'ER? WHY? IS SHE GONNA FIGHT FIRES BETTER IF WE DO?



CHIEF MILLER'S FACE GREW VERY STERN... LOOK HERE, MR. HARPER, I'M IN CHARGE NOW, AND WHAT I SAY GOES! AND I SAY WE'RE GOING TO POLISH AND SHINE THAT FIRE-TRUCK... AND KEEP IT POLISHED!



NOT 'OKAY? YES, CHIEF! Y-YES... CHIEF! NOW, GO DOWN TO THE HARDWARE STORE AND GET TWO CANS OF BRASS POLISH, TWO CANS OF CHROME POLISH, TWO GALLONS OF RED PAINT, TWO BRUSHES, AND SOME RAGS...



OLD DAN HOBBOLED OFF DOWN THE STREET TOWARD THE HARDWARE STORE... HMMMPH. AFTER SEVENTEEN YEARS, THEY HIRE SOME YOUNG WHIPPER-SNAPPER WITH NEW-FANGLED IDEAS TO BOSS ME AROUND. HMMMPH...



TWENTY MINUTES LATER HE RETURNED TO THE FIREHOUSE, HIS ARMS FILLED WITH PACKAGES...

HERE'S WHAT YOU WANTED, YOUNG FELLER! WHIEW!

'CHIEF MILLER', IF YOU DON'T MIND, MR. HARPER, WELL, LET'S GET TO WORK...



DAN LOOKED AROUND...

JUS' LEMME CATCH MY BREATH. LEMME SET FOR A SPELL IN MY...MY... SAY? WHERE IN BLAZES IS MY WICKER CHAIR?

I PUT IT UP- STAIRS, MR. HARPER. THEY'LL BE NO LOLLING AROUND DOWN HERE FROM NOW ON!





LOLLIN' AROUND! LOOK HERE, YOU YOUNG SQUIRT. I WAS FIGHTIN' FIRES BEFORE YOU WERE OLD ENOUGH TO PUSH A TOY FIRE TRUCK. AN I BEEN LOLLIN', AS YOU CALL IT, IN THAT WICKER DOWN HERE ALL THAT TIME. AND...

FROM NOW ON, WE REST UPSTAIRS, MR. HARPER. I INTEND TO INSTALL A GOT AND A RADIO AND OTHER COMFORTS...



AND HOW YOU 'SPECT WE'RE GONNA GET DOWN WHEN AN ALARM COMES IN? JUMP? OR ROLL DOWN THEM BACK STAIRS?

I INTEND TO INSTALL A DESCENT-POLE, MR. HARPER. A WELL-POLISHED POLE, UPON WHICH WE WILL SLIDE DOWN FROM UPSTAIRS IN A SPLIT-SECOND. BUT ENOUGH TALK. THERE'S WORK TO DO...



AND SO, OLD DAN AND EAGER NEW CHIEF MILLER SET TO WORK PAINTING AND POLISHING THE OLD FIRE-TRUCK UNTIL IT GLEAMED LIKE NEW.

THERE! THAT LOOKS BETTER!

HMMPH.



THEN THE FIRE HOUSE WAS SCRUBBED AND PAINTED...



QUITE A CHANGE, EH?

HMMPH!

...AND A DESCENT-POLE WAS INSTALLED...

NOW WE'RE GETTING SOMEWHERE...

HMMPH!



SO OLD DAN HARPER WAS FORCED TO WORK HIS HEART OUT FOR THE NEW CHIEF. HE POLISHED AND PAINTED TILL HIS OLD BONES ACHED. FOR THERE WERE TWO THINGS THAT H'D MEANT EVERYTHING IN THE WORLD TO DAN: HIS JOB IN THE FIRE DEPARTMENT, AND THE SMALL HOUSE JUST OUTSIDE OF TOWN TO WHICH HE NOW RETURNED, EXHAUSTED, EACH NIGHT...

WHEN! LORD, I'M DONE IN. THAT YOUNG EAGER-BEAVER'S TRYIN' TO WORK ME TO DEATH!



OLD DAN'S LITTLE HOUSE WAS HIS PRIDE AND JOY. AND HIS JOB WITH LYNDALE'S FIRE DEPARTMENT HAD BEEN HIS WHOLE LIFE. BUT NOW, CHIEF MILLER HAD COME UPON THE SCENE, AND OLD DAN'S JOB HAD BECOME A NIGHTMARE FOR HIM...

IF YOU'RE TOO OLD TO COME DOWN THAT POLE PROPERLY, THEN YOU'RE NOT FIT TO BE A FIREMAN.

PUFF...PUFF... OKAY! OKAY! I'LL TRY IT AGAIN...



CHIEF MILLER MADE IT ROUGH ON OLD DAN. IT WAS OBVIOUS THAT HE CONSIDERED DAN TOO OLD FOR THE JOB AND WAS TRYING TO DISCOURAGE HIM...TO MAKE HIM QUIT. BUT OLD DAN WAS STUBBORN...



EVENING, CHIEF MILLER.

YOU'RE THREE MINUTES LATE, MR. HARPER. I INSIST UPON PUNCTUALITY WHEN REPORTING FOR DUTY!

SHUCKS, IT WAS SUCH A NICE NIGHT, I WALKED INTO TOWN.

WELL, DON'T LET IT HAPPEN AGAIN. DURING YOUR SHIFT TONIGHT, I WANT YOU TO POLISH ALL THE BRASS... UNDERSTAND?



ALTHOUGH LYNDALE'S FIRE DEPARTMENT WAS RARELY CALLED UPON BECAUSE OF ITS SMALL POPULATION (152, LAST CENSUS), CHIEF MILLER HAD INSTITUTED A TWO-SHIFT, TWENTY-FOUR-HOUR-A-DAY POLICY...



POLISH ALL THE BRASS? YES, SIR. EH...HOW'S YOUR NEW HOUSE, CHIEF MILLER?

VERY NICE. WELL, GOOD-NIGHT, MR. HARPER.

THERE WERE TIMES WHEN OLD DAN HAD THE URGE TO CHUCK THE WHOLE DEAL. THE CONSTANT PRESSURES EXERTED ON HIM BY THE NEW FIRE CHIEF CERTAINLY MADE HIM MISERABLE. BUT HE'D GRITTED HIS TEETH AND STUCK DOGGEDLY TO THE JOB...



I WON'T GIVE UP. I WON'T. NO YOUNG JOHNNY-COME-LATELY IS GOING TO MAKE ME TOSS AWAY A JOB I'VE HAD FOR SEVENTEEN YEARS. WHERE'S THAT BLASTED POLISH...

CHIEF MILLER FINALLY WENT TO SEE MAYOR WITTER...



FIRE-FIGHTING IS A YOUNG MAN'S PROFESSION, MAYOR. MR. HARPER IS TOO OLD.

SORRY, CHIEF. MILLER. I COULDN'T FIRE HIM.

BUT, HE'S A HINDRANCE MORE THAN A HELP. I'VE TRIED TO DISCOURAGE HIM...



IF HE WON'T QUIT, THEN YOUR JUST HAVE TO KEEP HIM ON TILL HE REACHES RETIREMENT AGE...

BUT THAT'S NOT FOR ANOTHER FIVE YEARS!

I KNOW THAT, CHIEF MILLER. MAYBE YOU CAN FIGURE OUT A WAY TO CONVINCE HIM...



IT WAS WHILE CHIEF MILLER WAS ON THE NIGHT SHIFT THAT THE ALARM CAME IN...

215 ELM. HURRY! THE OLD PLACE IS BLAZIN'! I THINK OLD DAN'S TRAPPED INSIDE... I'LL BE RIGHT THERE...



CHIEF MILLER LEAPED FROM HIS COT. THEN, HE STOPPED...

OF COURSE! WHAT AM I RUSHING FOR? NOW I CAN GET RID OF THAT OLD CODGER ONCE AND FOR ALL...



SLOWLY, DELIBERATELY, HE DRESSED IN HIS FIRE-FIGHTING EQUIPMENT...

HEH, HEH! TRAPPED... EH?



JUST BEFORE PUTTING ON HIS RUBBER BOOTS, THE CHIEF LIT A CIGARETTE...

THAT'S TOO BAD...



HE SMOKED A WHILE, THEN PUT THE CIGARETTE OUT AND DONNED HIS BOOTS...

I CAN KILL TWO BIRDS WITH ONE STONE! I'LL SAY THE OLD FIRE-TRUCK WOULDN'T START!



HE SLID SLOWLY DOWN THE POLISHED DESCENT-POLE...

I'LL GET RID OF OLD DAN, AND I'LL CONVINCE THE TOWN COUNCIL THAT THEY NEED A NEW FIRE-TRUCK... BOTH AT THE SAME TIME!



CHIEF MILLER UNLOCKED THE HOOD OF THE FIRE-TRUCK AND GRINNED IN AT THE ENGINE...

I WONDER WHY IT WOULDN'T START... HEH, HEH...



THEN HE STROLLED TO THE FIRE-HOUSE DOORS AND SWUNG THEM OPEN...

WELL. THAT OUGHT TO DO IT! IT'S BEEN FIFTEEN MINUTES SINCE THE CALL CAME IN...



THE OLD FIRE-TRUCK LEAPED FROM THE FIRE-HOUSE, SIREN SCREAMING...

HEH, HEH...



WHEN THE FIRE-TRUCK FINALLY ARRIVED ON THE SCENE, OLD DAN'S HOUSE HAD BURNED TO THE GROUND WITH OLD DAN INSIDE IT...

I COULDN'T GET THE OLD ENGINE **STARTED!** IT WAS **AWFUL...**

HE... HE COULD'VE BEEN **SAVED** IF YOU'D GOTTEN HERE RIGHT AFTER I **CALLED...**



OF COURSE, NO ONE SUSPECTED CHIEF MILLER OF DELIBERATELY STALLING IN GETTING TO THE FIRE THAT HAD KILLED OLD DAN. THEY BELIEVED HIS STORY... AND A MONTH LATER, THE NEW FIRE-TRUCK ARRIVED...

HEH, HEH...



BUT ONE NIGHT, CHIEF MILLER RECEIVED ANOTHER ALARM. THE VOICE ON THE LINE WAS STRANGE... ALMOST LAUGHING...

71 BEECHTREE DRIVE... WHAT A BLAZE! **HURRY...**

71 BEECH-  
TREE DRIVE!  
WHY, THAT'S  
MY HOUSE!



CHIEF MILLER DIDN'T STALL AROUND **THIS** TIME. THIS WAS AN **EMERGENCY**. HE LEAPED FROM HIS COT, AND DRESSED LIKE A DEMON...

THAT VOICE ON THE PHONE... IT SOUNDED FAMILIAR! WELL, I CAN'T WASTE TIME THINKING ABOUT THAT NOW...



HE RUSHED TO THE DESCENT-POLE, WRAPPED HIS ARMS AND LEGS AROUND IT, AND PLUMMETED DOWNWARD...

OH, LORD... I KNOW! I KNOW WHOSE VOICE THAT WAS! IT WAS HIS! OLD DAN HARPER'S! NO! NO, IT COULDN'T...



THE NEXT MORNING, THEY FOUND WHAT WAS LEFT OF CHIEF MILLER LYING BESIDE THE NEW FIRE-ENGINE AT THE BOTTOM OF THE DESCENT-POLE IN A POOL OF DRYING BLOOD. HIS ARMS AND LEGS HAD BEEN SEVERED FROM HIS BODY AND HIS TORSO NEARLY SPLIT IN TWO. SOMEONE... OR SOMETHING... HAD REPLACED THE DESCENT-POLE WITH A **STEEL STRIP, SHARPENED TO A KEEN RAZOR-EDGE**...



WHICH BRINGS MY TALE TO A **CUTTING CLIMAX**. EH, FIENOS? CAN YOU **PICTURE** SLICING DOWN A **FIFTEEN-FOOT KNIFE BLADE**? QUITE A **STRETCH** OF THE IMAGINATION, EH? WASN'T THAT A **GEM** OF A YARN? I'LL **RAZOR** 'NOTHER ONE NEXT TIME WE MEET... IN **V.K.'S SHARP MAG, THE VAULT OF HORROR**...

AND NOW, THE **OLD WITCH** AWAITS WITH HER **HONE-COOKED YARN**. 'BYE, NOWFOH, BY THE WAY, **GILLETTE** THE CAT OUT TONIGHT? 'BYE!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE. SMELL THE CONCOCTION I'M COOKIN' IN MY CRUDDY CAULDRON? IT'S A REEKING RECIPE OF REVOLTING REVELRY THAT I'M SURE YOU'LL ENJOY. THIS IS YOUR HOSTESS IN THE NAUNT OF FEAR, WAITING TO DSH OUT ANOTHER OF HER LURID LUNCNEONS. READY? THEN I'LL START FEEDING YOU THE FOUL FARE I CALL...

## The ROVER BOYS!

**PROLOGUE:** THE DAWN SKY IS LIKE A GREY BLANKET HANGING LOW OVER THE STILL-SLEEPING CITY. HERE AND THERE A FEW STARS, RELUCTANT TO RETREAT FROM THE DAYLIGHT NOW BLOOMING IN THE EAST, TWINKLE FAINTLY AND THEN FADE. BELOW, THE STREET-LIGHTS STILL CAST DARK SHADOWS IN THE CANYONS BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS. A MILK WAGON CAREENS OVER THE COBBLE-STONES, ITS FRANTIC DRIVER UNSUCCESSFULLY ATTEMPTING TO HALT THE OLD HORSEWHO WHINNIES AND SNORTS, GALLOPING MADLY. FLASHING METAL-SHOOD HOOVES SPARK AGAINST THE PAVEMENT. A PACK OF STRAY DOGS, Slobbering and YELPING, LEAP AND SCRAMBLE... NIPPING AND CLAWING AT THE DASHING HORSE. ITS FLANKS ARE SCARRED AND BLEEDING... ITS EYES FILLED WITH TERROR.



WHOA THERE, BOY! WHOA...



**STORY:** DOCTOR SHELTON REMSEN STOOD BEFORE THE FIVE GRIM-FACED MEMBERS OF THE STATE MEDICAL BOARD LISTENING TO THE CHAIRMAN'S COLD AND EXPRESSIONLESS VOICE MOUTHING THE WORDS THAT MEANT THE END OF EVERYTHING FOR HIM...

AND SO, DOCTOR REMSEN, IT IS THE DECISION OF THIS BOARD, IN VIEW OF THE EVIDENCES PRESENTED HERE OF CONDUCT UNBECOMING A MEMBER OF THE MEDICAL PROFESSION, THAT YOUR LICENSE BE REVOKED AND THAT YOU BE BARRED FROM EVER PRACTISING MEDICINE AGAIN.

NO!  
NO!



THE CHAIRMAN LOOKED AROUND. THE MEMBERS OF THE BOARD ROSE SILENTLY AND FILED FROM THE ROOM. DR. SHELDON REMSEN LIFTED HIS HANDS IN A FINAL PLEADING GESTURE...

PLEASE! I BEG OF YOU... DON'T DO THIS TO ME. MEDICINE IS MY LIFE! PLEASE...



DR. REMSEN DARTED FORWARD. HE CLUTCHED AT THE SLEEVE OF THE LAST DEPARTING BOARD MEMBER...

WOULDN'T YOU RECONSIDER? I BEG YOU FOR LENIENCY! I MADE A MISTAKE! I'M SORRY! PLEASE...  
THE DECISION OF THE BOARD IS FINAL, DR. REMSEN. IF YOU PLEASE...



DOCTOR REMSEN STOOD ALONE IN THE BOARD ROOM. FAINT LAUGHTER DRAFTED THROUGH THE DOOR BEYOND WHICH HIS JUDGES AND CONDEMNERS HAD DISAPPEARED HE CURSED...

GO AHEAD, YOU RIGHTEOUS OLD \*#%\$!%\$!%\$! LAUGH! LAUGH AT ME! WE'LL SEE WHO HAS THE LAST LAUGH...



STRIPPED OF HIS PRIVILEGE TO PRACTISE MEDICINE, AND SPURNED BY HIS PROFESSION, DR. REMSEN WALKED SLOWLY FROM THE BOARD ROOM, ACROSS THE ECHOING FOYER OF THE MEDICAL BUILDING, AND OUT INTO THE WARM SUNLIGHT. HE FELT NAKED AND EXPOSED, AND HATE FILLED HIS HEART...

I'LL HAVE MY REVENGE! YOU'LL BE SORRY... ALL OF YOU!



HE MOVED UP THE CROWDED STREETS. HE WAS JOSTLED AND PUSHED AND CARRIED ALONG BY THE JABBING THROGS. BUT HE FELT AND HEARD NOTHING. DR. REMSEN'S MIND WAS FAR AWAY, PLANNING, DISCLAIMING, AND PLANNING AGAIN...

I HATE THEM! I'LL GET EACH OF THEM... ONE BY ONE! BUT HOW? HOW?



A SHADOW FELL ACROSS HIM, BLOCKING THE SUN. DR. REMSEN LOOKED AROUND. HE WAS UNDER A MARQUEE... A THEATER MARQUEE. THE COLORFUL BILLBOARD BLINKED AT HIM...

HMMM. 'CAPTAIN JOHN SMYTHE AND HIS TRAINED SEALS. SEE THEM PERFORM. THEY'RE ALMOST HUMAN!'



THE LAST LINE SCREAMED. THE WORDS SEEM TO LIGHT UP...

'THEY'RE ALMOST HUMAN! OF COURSE...'



THE DOCTOR SLID THE MONEY UNDER THE BOX-OFFICE GLASS AND HELD UP HIS INDEX-FINGER...



LAUGHTER ERUPTED FROM A HUNDRED MOUTHS AS HE MOVED SOFTLY DOWN THE CARPETED AISLE. ON-STAGE, A CLOWN WAS CAVORTING...



THE CLOWN SOMERSAULTED OFF INTO THE WINGS AMID CHEERS AND APPLAUSE. DR. REMSEN SAT DOWN...



THE CURTAIN WENT UP. THE GLIMMERING BLACK SEALS BARKED AND SWAYED. THEIR UNIFORMED TRAINER BEGAN THE ACT. DR. REMSEN'S GRIM MOUTH SLOWLY STRETCHED INTO A LEERING GRIN.



THE ACT WAS OVER. DR. REMSEN LEFT THE THEATER. HIS EVIL PLAN WAS FORMING IN HIS HATE-FILLED MIND...



THE PET SHOP SMELLED OF FLEA-POWDER AND ANIMAL SWEAT AND BIRD-SEED AND ECHOED WITH THE SQUEALS OF MONKEYS AND PARROTS AND THE HOWLING OF DOGS...



WE HAVE SOME FINE THOROUGHBRED BOXERS... OR WOULD YOU PREFER FRENCH-POODLES...



DOCTOR REMSEN'S LABORATORY WAS SILENT EXCEPT FOR THE OCCASIONAL WHINES OF THE DOGS THAT COWERED BEHIND THE WIRE MESH OF THE FIVE CAGES THAT LINED THE ROOM. THE DOCTOR WAS BUSY PLACING SHINY INSTRUMENTS INTO A STEAMING STERILIZER...

A KNOCK RESOUNDED THROUGH THE LABORATORY. THE DOGS BEGAN TO YELP. DOCTOR REMSEN WENT TO THE DOOR AND OPENED IT...

"YOU! REMSEN!  
SO THIS IS WHERE  
YOU LIVE NOW?  
BUT I THOUGHT...

YOU THOUGHT YOU WERE  
PAYING A HOUSE-CALL ON  
A SICK MAN, EH, DOCTOR HALE?  
THAT'S WHAT I WANTED YOU  
TO THINK!

SOON, MY LITTLE PETS. SOON,  
NOW...



DOCTOR REMSEN WAVED THE SMALL PISTOL AT THE SURPRISED BOARD-CHAIRMAN...

INSIDE, DOCTOR HALE! AND WHAT'S  
DON'T TRY ANYTHING. I THE  
WOULDN'T HESITATE TO MEANING  
USE THIS... OF THIS, REMSEN?



IT MEANS, MY DEAR CHAIRMAN OF  
THE MEDICAL BOARD, THAT I AM  
GOING TO TAKE MY REVENGE  
UPON YOU AND YOUR  
FELLOW BOARD-  
MEMBERS FOR  
HAVING EXCLUDED  
ME FROM YOUR  
PROFESSION!

YOU'RE  
MAD,  
REMSSEN.



PERHAPS, DOCTOR  
HALE! AND NOW, IF  
YOU WILL REMOVE  
YOUR COAT, WE WILL  
GET ON WITH THE  
OPERATION.

OPERATION? WHAT...WHAT  
ARE YOU GOING  
TO DO?



DO? WHY, I AM GOING TO REMOVE  
YOUR BRAIN, DOCTOR, AND SUB-  
STITUTE IT FOR THE INADEQUATE  
BRAIN THAT NOW RESTS IN THE  
CRANIAL CAVITY OF ONE OF  
THOSE MISERABLE DOGS  
THERE!

REMSSEN!  
FOR GOD'S  
SAKE!  
PUT DOWN THAT  
HYPODERMIC!



OUTSIDE THE OLD HOUSE INTO WHICH DOCTOR REMSEN  
HAD MOVED HIS LABORATORY, THE WIND WHISTLED, CARRY-  
ING THE ECHO OF DOCTOR HALE'S SCREAM ACROSS THE  
DESERTED COUNTRYSIDE...





ON THE NIGHTS THAT FOLLOWED, ONE BY ONE, THE OTHER MEMBERS OF THE STATE MEDICAL BOARD CAME TO THE LONELY HOUSE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF THE CITY...



YOU? REMSEN?

WELCOME, DOCTOR SIMPSON!

ONE BY ONE, THEY CAME... BUT NONE WENT AWAY. ON THE FIFTH MORNING, FIVE FRESH-DUG GRAVES LAY SILENTLY IN THE DAWN-LIGHT BEHIND THE HOUSE...



INSIDE, IN THE LABORATORY, FIVE DOGS WITH HUMAN BRAINS COINED BEHIND THE MESH-WIRED DOORS OF THEIR KENNELS...



YOU WILL PERFORM AS YOU ARE BID, MY FRIENDS. EVEN IN YOUR ALIEN BOOIES, YOU STILL HAVE THE DESIRE TO SURVIVE...

AND YOU WILL SURVIVE SO LONG AS YOU COOPERATE! IF YOU DON'T... YOU WILL DIE! AND NOW... WE MUST BEGIN REHEARSING OUR ACT!



AND SO, SILENTLY, WITH TAILS BETWEEN THEIR LEGS, AND A GROWING HATE GLEAMING IN THEIR EYES, THE FIVE REMARKABLY INTELLIGENT CANINES WENT THROUGH THE MOTIONS OF LEARNING THEIR FABULOUS ACT...



MY DEAR DOCTOR HALE, PERHAPS A DAY WITHOUT YOUR RATIONS WILL CONVINCE YOU THAT I MEAN BUSINESS! WHEN I CALL 'ROVER!', YOU BARK THE ANSWER...CORRECTLY!

FINALLY, THE TIME CAME. UNDER AN ASSUMED NAME, DR. REMSEN MADE AN APPOINTMENT WITH A THEATRICAL AGENT AND PROUDLY AUDITIONED HIS ANIMAL ACT...



AMAZING, MR. SHELDON! AMAZING! I'LL BOOK YOUR ACT IN EVERY VAUDEVILLE HOUSE IN THE COUNTRY! YOU'RE MADE...

AND SO, IN THE VERY SAME THEATER WHERE DR. SHELDON REMSEN HAD SEEN THE TRAINED SEALS THAT HAD GIVEN HIM HIS FANTASTIC AND DIABOLICAL SCHEME, SHELDON'S DOGS MADE THEIR THEATRICAL DEBUT...



LADIES AND GENTLEMEN! THE GREATEST ANIMAL ACT TO EVER PERFORM UPON ANY STAGE, SHELDON'S INTELLIGENT DOGS, THEY COUNT... THEY SPELL...THEY DO EVERYTHING BUT TALK!

DR. REMSEN'S ANIMAL ACT GAINED IMMEDIATE SUCCESS. HIS AMAZING DOGS ASTOUNDED PEOPLE. DOGS COULD BE TRAINED TO APPEAR INTELLIGENT, BUT HIS...



YOUR QUESTION, SIR?

WHAT YEAR DID COLUMBUS DISCOVER AMERICA?

THE DOGS ACTUALLY PICKED OUT CARDS CONTAINING THE CORRECT ANSWERS TO MATHEMATICAL PROBLEMS, HISTORICAL DATES...

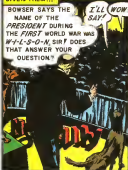


1492! QUITE CORRECT, ROVER!

AMAZING! INCREDIBLE!

BRAVO!

THE DOGS MANIPULATED ALPHABET BLOCKS TO ANSWER QUESTIONS GIVEN THEM...



BOWSER SAYS THE NAME OF THE PRESIDENT DURING THE FIRST WORLD WAR WAS W-I-L-S-O-N, SIR? DOES THAT ANSWER YOUR QUESTION?

I'LL WOW! SAY!

FINALLY, DUE TO THE GRUELLING SCHEDULE OF TRAVELLING THE VAUDEVILLE CIRCUITS, DR. REMSEN RETURNED TO HIS LONELY HOUSE ON THE OUTSKIRTS OF TOWN FOR A BRIEF VACATION.



HEH, HEH! WELL, MY LITTLE PETS! THANKS TO YOU, I AM GETTING RICHER EACH DAY!

SOON, I WILL BE READY TO RETIRE! OH IT WILL BE SUCH A SHOCK TO THE THEATRICAL WORLD WHEN YOU ARE ALL DESTROYED IN AN UNFORTUNATE FIRE!



THE NIGHT THAT DOCTOR REMSEN MADE HIS STARTLING PRONOUNCEMENT AS TO THE FUTURE OF THE HUMAN-BRAINED CANINES, HE CARELESSLY LEFT ONE OF THE WIRE-MESH KENNEL DOORS UNLOCKED, AFTER HE'D RETIRED, A SLEEK FORM MOVED FROM KENNEL TO KENNEL, UNLOCKING THE OTHER DOORS...



DOCTOR REMSEN HAD BEEN RIGHT. THE DESIRE TO SURVIVE WAS INDEED STRONG...EVEN FOR IMPRISONED HUMAN BRAINS. A LOW GROWL AWAKENED THE DOCTOR AND HE SAT UP IN BED STARING INTO FIVE PAIRS OF BLAZING EYES...



NO! OH, LORD, NO...

ONE OF THE REMARKABLE DOGS HELD A HYPODERMIC IN ITS Slobbering MOUTH...

TOWARD MORNING, AN OLD HORSE ON A NEARBY FARM WAS ATTACKED BY A PACK OF YELPING WILD DOGS AND DRIVEN TOWARD THE OLD HOUSE...

AND DAWN FOUND A SIXTH GRAVE ADDED TO THE SILENT FIVE...



THE FARMER WHO OWNED THE HORSE FOUND IT WANDERING MILES FROM THE FARM THE NEXT DAY...

AND FIVE DOGS WERE SEEN OFTEN IN LATER WEEKS, YELPING AND RACING THROUGH THE STREETS OF THE CITY...

THERE YOU ARE, BOY! GET ALONG HOME NOW. THAT MILK COMPANY MAN'S COMIN' TO BUY YOU!



THE MILK COMPANY RECEIVED NUMEROUS COMPLAINTS ABOUT THE NEW HORSE FROM ITS DRIVER...

GAZY, THAT'S WHAT HE IS. ALWAYS SMORTIN' AND WHIMMIN' AND STAMPIN' HIS HOOF'S... LIKE HE WERE TRYIN' TO TELL ME SOMETHIN'!



**EPILOGUE:** THE DAWN SKY IS LIKE A GREY BLANKET. A MILK-WAGON CAREENS OVER THE COBBLESTONES, ITS HORSE GALLOPING MADLY. A PACK OF STRAY DOGS... FIVE OF THEM... Slobbering and barking... LEAP AND SCRAMBLE, NIPPING AND CLAWING AT THE FRENZIED ANIMAL. ITS FLANKS ARE SCARRED AND BLEEDING... ITS EYES FILLED WITH TERROR. AND THE YELPING DOGS SEEM TO BE LAUGHING AT IT...



WHOA THERE, BOY! WHOA!

HEE, HEE! SO DOC REMSEN, 'CAUSE HE HORSED AROUND WITH BRAINS, ENDED UP WITH HIS IN ONE. WELL, KIDDIES, NEXT TIME YOU SEE A PACK OF HOWLIN' MUTTS CHASIN' AN OLD HORSE UP THE STREET, THINK OF THIS TERROR-TIDBIT I'VE JUST FED YOU. DON'T LAUGH! THEY MIGHT BE THE STATE MEDICAL BOARD HOUNDING DOCTOR SHELDON

REMSER! HEE, HEE. WELL, THAT ABOUT WINDS UP G.K.'S MAG. I'LL BE COOKIN' AGAIN IN THE VAULT OF HORROR! 'BYE, NOW.



**TERROR**



NO. 38  
OCT. - NOV.

# TALES



10¢

FROM THE

# CRYPT

**FEATURING**



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER





# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEN, HEH, WELL, ALL I CAN SAY IS... YOU'RE EITHER *FANS* OR *FRIENDS* FOR PLUNKIN' DOWN GOOD U.S. DUMP-  
RENTS FOR THIS BEERIN' MAG. IN ANY CASE... *GREETINGS SHOULD!* WELCOME, ONCE MORE TO THE  
CRYPT OF TERROR... TO THE FRIGHT PAGE OF THIS... THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S MAG, I'M READY TO START  
OFF THE EVIL FESTIVITIES WITH AN ODD TALE TOLD TO ME BY AN ODD TELLER OF ANY TALE... A  
FRUNK. LISTEN, NOW, TO THE STEAMER'S OWN BOREAL-STORY, WHICH IT CALLS...

## TIGHT GRIP!



THE LAYERS OF DUST THAT HAD SETTLED UPON ME  
OVER THE YEARS HAVE BEEN SCRUBBED AWAY, AND  
NOW I LIE UPON WILMA'S BEDROOM FLOOR. MY LID  
FLUNG WIDE, TAWNING HAPPILY AND THALLDONTING THE  
NEATLY FOLDED CLOTHES SHE IS BUSILY PACKING  
INTO MY INSIDES. I FEEL CLEAN AND FRESH AND NEW  
AND ALIVE AGAIN AFTER LYING DEAD FOR SO LONG IN  
THE GLENT LITTERED ATTIC. AND THERE IS A JOY  
WITHIN ME THAT MINORS WILMA'S JOY. FOR TODAY,  
WILMA IS TO BE MARRIED...

TUM-TH-TUM-TH-TYE-OYE-DEM  
OH, YES, FEEVES, WHAT IS IT?

MR. ROOSEVELT IS  
HERE, MISS WILMA...



WILMA IS LIKE A CHILD AGAIN AS SHE FLITS ABOUT HER BEDROOM SINGING RAPIDLY... THE CHILD I *KNEW* WHO USED TO STEAL UP TO THE ATTIC WHEN WE WERE *BOTH* NO FINGER AND FEET *JINGLE* ME AND FINGER THE OLD LACE AND CLOTH THAT HAD BEEN STORED IN ME AND FORGOTTEN...

CARL? OH... HE'S *EARLY*? I'M NOT EVEN *READY*? SHOW HIM MY JEWELS.

YES, MA'AM



YES, I AM AN OLD THING. I WAS WITH WILMA'S PARENTS ON THEIR *HONEYMOON*. I WAS *AFR*, THEN AND I CARRIED THEIR BELONGINGS WHEN THEY MOVED *HERE*... TO *THIS HOUSE* AND THEN I WAS PUT *AWAY*, UP *THERE*, WHERE ALL I COULD DO WAS *WAIT* AND *LISTEN* AND *WISH* OLD...

CARL, CARL...

WILMA, MY PET



I HEARD MANY THINGS WHILE I LAY THERE LATHERING GUSTS IN MY ATTIC GRAVE. I HEARD THE LUSTY CRY OF THE NEW-BORN INFANT NAMED WILMA. I HEARD HER CHILDISH VOICE AS SHE SCAMPED ABOUT DOWNSTAIRS AND I SAW HER WHEN SHE CAME TO ME AND PLAYED WITH ME AND LAUGHED GAILY.

ALMOST *PACKED* WILMA, DEAR?

ALMOST, CARL...



AND I LOVED HER. EVEN *AFTER* SHE'D *SHOWN* AND NO LONGER *CAME* TO ME AND SEARCHED MY CONTENTS AND TRIED ON MY SHAWLS AND DRESSES AND SCARFS. I LOVED HER. EVEN WHEN ALL I COULD DO WAS *LIE* THERE AND *LISTEN* TO HER... *BELIEVE*... LISTEN TO HER FOOTSTEPS GOING *HEAVY* WITH THE *FEARS*, AND HER MOTHER'S AND FATHER'S FOOTSTEPS *DIS-*APPEAR WITH THEIR *DEATHS*...

I'VE CALLED THE *JUSTICE* OF THE *PEACE* AND HE'S *WAITING* FOR US. THE *RESERVATIONS* AT THE *HOTEL* ARE *SET*...

OH, CARL, I'M SO *NEEDY*! I CAN *SCARCELY* *PAGE*...



AND I FELT HER YOUTH PASS AS SHE FELT IT PASS. AND I *PRAYED* AS SHE *PRAYED*... THAT SHE WAS *NOT* DESTINED TO A... LIFE OF *LONGEVITY*... THAT SHE WOULD *MEET* SOMEONE AND HE WOULD *ASK* HER TO BE HIS *WIFE*. AND *NOW* OUR *PRAYERS*, WILMA'S AND MINE, HAD COME *TRUE*...

*HERE*... LET ME! YOU DO MY *HEADS* I'LL *FINISH* UP...

YES, OH, DEAR... I HOPE I HAVEN'T *FORGOTTEN* ANYTHING...



JUST *ONE* THING, THOUGH... ONE THING THAT *BOTHERS* ME... ONE THING THAT *SPOILS* THE JOY I FEEL... *THIS* MAN... *THIS* CARL *ROOSEVELT*... *THIS* MAN WHO EVEN NOW ANXIOUSLY STUFFS THE LAST FEW ARTICLES OF WILMA'S NEWLY-PURCHASED TRUNK INTO ME. I AM *AFRAID* OF THIS MAN.

*THERE?* READY TO *GO*, WILMA?

READY, CARL?



I FEEL HIS ROUGH HANDS UPON MY LIP, SLAMMING IT DOWN, AND I WHINE... *NOT* WITH *PAIN*, *NOT* FROM *THE HOUSE*... I WHINE WITH *FEAR*. THERE IS SOMETHING *ABOUT* THIS MAN. SOMETHING... *TERRIFYING*.

LET'S *GO*, THEN...

YOU *RARE*, WAGNET?

CARRY MY *TRUNK* OUT TO THE *CAR*, JEEVES!



NOW JEEVES IS COMING TOWARDS ME AND I FEEL MYSELF BEING LIFTED AND CARRIED.

HEAVY HEAVY?

NOT VERY, MA'AM.



AND SUDDENLY I FEEL THE WARM SUN UPON ME FOR THE FIRST TIME IN THIRTY-NINE YEARS...

JUST TESS IT ON THE BACK SEAT THERE, JEEVES.

YES, MR. NORWELL.



AND AS CAR DOORS SLAM AND THE MOTOR ROARS, I SMILE HAPPILY. MY FEARS FORGOTTEN.

GOOD-BYE, JEEVES.

GOOD-BYE, MISS WILMA. GOOD LUCK! HAVE A HAPPY HONEYMOON.



I SIT CONTENTELY, FEELING OF THE SILK AND LACE AND FLAMBY THINGS INSIDE ME AND THE WIND UPON ME AS WE SPEED SOUTH... WILMA, AND I, AND THE SUN.

HAPPY, DARLING?

VERY.



AND THEN WE STOP AND WILMA AND CARL LEAP FROM THE CAR AND HURRY, SIGLING UP A FLOWERED WALK, AND I SEE THE SIGN AND HEAR THE WELCOMING VOICE OF THE JUSTICE OF THE PEACE.

RIGHT ON TIME. COME IN, COME IN.



I WAIT, DREAMING, AND AFTER A WHILE WILMA AND CARL COME OUT, AND THERE IS A BARD OF GOLD ON WILMA'S THIRD FINGER OF HER LEFT HAND AND I KNOW THAT SHE AND THE MAN ARE HUSBAND AND WIFE.

GOO BLESS YOU, AND THE BEST OF LUCK TO YOU BOTH.

THANKS

BYE



AND NOW IT IS EVENING, AND THE SKY GROWS DARK. WE PULL OFF THE HIGHWAY INTO A ROAD LEADING TO A VINE-COVERED HOTEL... WILMA AND CARL'S HONEYMOON HOTEL.

IT'S A DARLING SPOT, CARL.

I'M GLAD YOU LIKE IT, WILMA!





STRANGE HANDS PULL ME FROM THE CAR, CARRY ME ACROSS THE HOTEL LOBBY, AND DROP ME TO THE FLOOR BEFORE THE ELEVATOR, AND I LISTEN TO THE SCRATCHING OF THE PEN AS CARL REWRITES...

MR. AND MRS. CARL POTWELL. LOOKS SO GOOD, EX. MONEY?

IT LOOKS WONDERFUL, CARLING.



NOW WE ARE ALONE... WILMA AND I AND CARL. ALONE IN THIS HOTEL SUITE. AND SUDDENLY THAT FEAR IS BACK AGAIN. THAT FEAR OF THIS MAN WHO HAS TAKEN MY WILMA AS HIS BRIDE.

FIVED, DEARY.

VERY...



WILMA'S NERVOUS FINGERS LIFT MY LID AND SHE PUMMERS THROUGH ME, LIFTING OUT HER PRETTIEST GOWN. FOR THIS IS THE NIGHT WE'VE BOTH DREAMED OF... WILMA'S FLOODING RIGHT...

WILMA?

YES, CARL? WHAT?



CARL STARES BEFORE WILMA, THE GLASSING AND THAT HE'S JUST TAKEN FROM HIS BRIDE IN HIS HAND.

CARL? THAT ARE...

I'M GOING TO FILL YOU, WILMA...



CARL? YOU'RE JOOKING?

YOU'RE A FOOL, WILMA! DID YOU REALLY THINK I COULD LOVE YOU? DID YOU THINK I'M ALMOST FORTY I'M TWENTY-SEVEN IT WASN'T FOR, WILMA! IT WAS YOUR MONEY.



I PLANNED ALL THIS, WILMA. PLANNED IT CAREFULLY. YOU'RE GOING TO GET RICH... BE CONFINED TO YOUR ROOM. AND ALL THE WHILE, I'LL BE GETTING RID OF YOUR BODY PIECE BY PIECE. AND WHEN IT'S ALL BEEN DISPOSED OF, I'M GOING TO SAY YOU RAN AWAY... THAT WHEN I WOKED UP, YOU WERE GONE. AND THE POLICE WILL LOOK FOR YOU AND THEY WON'T FIND YOU. AND YOUR MONEY WILL BE MINE...



THEY ARE BLAZE CUTE WILMA'S SCREAM FOR HELP SHORT AS CARL BRINGS IT DOWN UPON HER BLANCHED FACE...

NO, CARL! NO! YAA... GHH...

YES, WILMA



I AM EMPTY NOW. CARL HAS STRIPPED ME OF MY CONTENTS...THE NEWLY-FURNISHED LINEN...THE SHOES...THE DRESSES. I LIE BESIDE THE BATH-ROOM DOOR, MY LID WIDE, WAITING...LISTENING IN HOPE FOR AN CARL. DISMEMBERS WILMA'S BODY WHERE HE'S CARRIED IT. IN THE TUB.



EH, EH, EH

THERE IS A SADNESS IN ME SOMEWHERE...DEEP IN THE WOODGRAINS, IN THE METAL REINFORCEMENTS, IN THE LEATHERETTE THAT COVERS ME...THERE IS A CRYING, AND A SADNESS AND AN ANGER. I FEARED THIS MAN. I FEARED FOR WILMA. NOW SHE LIES DEAD, BEING RENT ASUNDER BY THIS MAD MANIAC. SUDDENLY, I DESPISE HIM...DESPISE HIM WITH EVERY NUT AND SCREW IN MY BODY...

INTO THE TRUNK YOU GO.



I RECALL AS THE DISMEMBERED SECTION OF WILMA'S ONCE PROUD BODY DROPPED INSIDE ME, AND I FEEL ITS SOFTNESS AND THE FLUID THAT FLOWS FROM IT. I SLAM MY LID DOWN IN FRONT AND LOATHING AND



POOF

BAM

AND SUDDENLY, AND MY SADNESS, THERE IS GLEE. I HAVE HUNT THE MADMAN WHO HAS TAKEN MY LOVED ONE FROM ME. I CAN HURT HIM AGAIN...

BLASTED @W@! TRUNK! STAY OPEN, BLAST YOU!



ANOTHER PART OF WILMA IS TOSSED WITHIN ME AND AGAIN I SLAM MY LID SHUT UPON HIS CURSED BLOODY PAN...



P-P-P-P-P

WHAM

NOW CARL HAS JAMMED A STICK INTO MY MOUTH...FORCING MY LID TO STAY OPEN, PREVENTING ME FROM HURTING HIM, BUT THERE ARE OTHER WAYS. I WILL WAIT. HE FILLS ME WITH WILMA'S SEVERED REMAINS AND I ENRAGE THEM LOVINGLY...



THERE! DONE! NOW TO SHUT AND LOCK IT, AND CLEAN UP THE PLACE

I LIE LOCKED, WAITING...THE SLIMY SPIN INSIDE ME. I LISTEN AS CARL PAGES DOWN TO THE DESK

MY WIFE DOESN'T FEEL WELL. I WONDER IF YOU COULD SERVE OUR MEALS IN OUR ROOM. SHE WANTS TO REMAIN IN BED. AND...OH PLEASE, LEAVE WORD WITH THE CHAMBERMAID THAT WE ARE NOT TO BE DISTURBED



CARL IS **OLEVER... VERY** OLEVER. HE HAS TAKEN PILLOWS AND LAID THEM NEATLY UPON THE BED AND COVERED THEM WITH BLANKETS SO THAT IT APPEARS AS IF **WILMA LIES THERE**.

YOUR DINNER, MR. ROSWELL... OH, I THANK YOU, DINNER. MRS. ROSWELL IS ASLEEP IN THERE.



AND EVERY SO OFTEN, HE COMES TO ME AND UNLOCKS ME AND REMOVES A DISMEMBERED SECTION OF WILMA'S BODY AND WRAPS IT CAREFULLY IN THE PAPER HE'S BROUGHT FOR THE PURPOSE AND GOES OUT FOR A **WALK**.

LOSER! OUF, MR. ROSWELL. HOW'S MRS. ROSWELL? MUCH BETTER. REMEMBER, SHE'S **NOT TO BE DIS-TURBED**.



AND NO ONE SUSPECTS THE PLOT. ONLY I KNOW THE GRISLY TRUTH. THE DAYS PASS, THE PARTS INSIDE ME ARE SLOWLY **DISAPPEARING**, AND I GROW **DESPERATE**. I MUST **INWART** THIS PLOT, **EXPLORE** HIM.

OK, TIME FOR ANOTHER **WALK**. I'LL... I'LL... WHAT THE...



CARL STRUGGLES WITH THE LOCK BUT I HAVE JAMMED IT WELL. HE CHARGES, KICKS ME.



BUT MY LOCK HOLDS FAST. AND NOW CARL IS **DESPERATE**. THIS WILL CALL FOR A **CHANGE** OF PLANS. I LISTEN AS HE PHONES...



THE BELLBOY ARRIVES WITH HIS DOLLY, AND I FEEL MYSELF LIFTED AND FEEL WILMA'S DIED AND RIGID REMAINS DRIFT WITHIN ME.

TAKE IT DOWN TO THE **EXPRESS** OFFICE, SON. HERE'S THE ADDRESS IT GOES TO... YES, SIR.



AND NOW I AM BEING WHEELED OUT OF THE ELEVATOR, ACROSS THE CROWDED LOBBY. THIS IS WHAT I PLANNED. THIS IS WHAT WILL EXPOSE MY LOVED ONE'S MURDERER. I SNAP OPEN MY LOCK... **SWING** WHEE MY LIFE...



THE LOBBY OF THIS PLEASANT HOMETOWN HOTEL REVERBERATES WITH SCREAMS AS I SPILL FORTH MY BLOOD-STAINED GORY CONTENTS UPON THE PULCHRY CARPETED FLOOR.



AND UP ABOVE, CARL HEARS THE SCREAMS AND KNOWS THAT THE TRUTH IS OUT THAT HIS HORROROUS DEEDS HAS BEEN DISCOVERED, AND HE MAKES HIS EXIT...



AND NOW IT IS FOUR YEARS LATER. ONCE MORE I LIE IN DARKNESS BATHING BLOOD.



I LIE IN A WAREHOUSE WHERE THE POLICE HAVE BROUGHT ME UNTIL THEY CAN CATCH CARL AND BRING HIM TO TRIAL. AND PUT ME UP AS 'EXHIBIT A'.



I LIE THROUGH THE YEARS AND I WAIT. BUT NO ONE COMES FOR ME. NO ONE COMES TO TAKE ME OUT INTO THE SUNLIGHT. AND I GROW ANGRY AND HUNGER FOR REVENGE. NOW! AND WOULD I REVENGE.



VOICES, VOICES IN THE DARKNESS. AND ONE VOICE IS FAMILIAR. TWO SHADOWS WITH GLEAMING FLAME-LIGHTS MOVE TOWARD ME WHERE I LIE AMONG WARDROBES OF MEN COATS AND BOXES OF STOLEN ARTICLES THAT THE POLICE HAVE RECOVERED AND ARE HOLDING FOR THEIR CLAIMANTS.



THAT NAME. THAT VOICE. FOR FOUR YEARS I HAVE WAITED, STILL FEELING WILMA'S GORY REMAINS WITHIN ME. STILL HATING. STILL PRAYING FOR REVENGE. AND NOW, CARL ROSENTHAL IS HERE. BESIDE ME. I BRUSH...



THE BONES POLED UPON ME TUM-  
BLE WITH A CLATTER TO THE  
FLOOR. SOMEWHERE A VOICE  
CALLS OUT.



I FEEL ROUGH HANDS UPON MY  
LID. FAMILIAR ROUGH HANDS...  
CARL'S HANDS. HE SWINGS ME  
OPEN, STEPS INTO ME, AND I SWAL-  
LOW HIM GREEDILY.



HE BRINGS THE LID DOWN... CRASHING  
SILENTLY. BESIDE ME, LISTENING.



THE FOOTSTEPS DISAPPEAR. CARL TRIES TO OPEN THE  
LID. BUT I HAVE HIM NOW. I WON'T LET HIM GO. I  
AM MY LOCK... LISTENING TO HIM STRUGGLE.



CHOKES... I'M SUFFOCATING  
IN HERE, WILLY GET ME  
OUT. QUICK

BUT WILLY DOESN'T ANSWER. WILLY HAS RUN OFF,  
LEAVING CARL TO HIS FATE. CARL SNIFFS. THE AIR  
GROWS THICK. FINALLY, IN DESPERATION HE PULLS  
HIS LID... FIRING IT THROUGH MY TOES...



SNIFF. NEED AIR... SNIFF. BETTER  
TO... CHOKES... CHANGE BEING URGENT  
THAN

AND NOW I TAKE MY REVENGE. I BREATHE DEEP AND THEN EXHALE. I  
EXHALE ALL OF THE HATE AND LOATHING AND DESIRE FOR REVENGE  
WITHIN ME. AND **CRASHING**. MY **SHOES CLOSE DOWN** AND MY **TOP**  
**SPRINKLES DOWN** AND I GROW **SMALL** AND CARL SCREAMS UNTIL HE CAN  
NOT SCREAM ANY MORE AND HIS FLESH Oozes FROM THE BULLET HOLES  
LIKE GUM FROM A JUNKY'S DECORATING BAG. AND WHEN THEY COME, THEY  
FIND ME... A TINY BOX WITH A MOLD OF COMPRESSED BONE INSIDE ME AND  
A THOUSAND YARDS OF FLESH-RISSON AROUND ME...



CHOKES...

NEVER. YEP, KIDDER. WILMA'S  
OLD TRUCK SHUT CARL UP ALL RIGHT.  
ANYBODY CARE FOR A FOOT SQUARE  
BONE CUBE? IF YOU COULD FIND A  
MATE FOR IT, YOU COULD MARK 'EM  
WITH SPOTS AND HAVE A **PIECE** OF A  
**GRAP** GAME. NOT MY **SOUL**. I'LL  
USE IT AS A PAPER-WEIGHT TO HOLD  
DOWN MY NEXT TARN TILL WE MEET  
AGAIN LATER ON IN MY MUCK MAN.  
RIGHT NOW, THE **RAVET-KEEPER**



SHOTS WITH **AND**  
OFFERING. I'LL  
BE SHOVELING  
OFF. TILL WE  
SEEK AGAIN  
'BYE!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEEMENT YEP, CREEPY...IT'S YOUR SCREAM-STORY-TELLER IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO ENTERTAIN YOU WITH ONE OF MY CREEPY COLLECTORS' ITEMS. FOR MY SPOT IN C.R.'S...ST...MAY, I HAVE CHOSEN A BAT TALE OF MARSH BRAD MORRISITE ENTITLED...

## ...ONLY SKIN DEEP!

HERBERT HAD MADE UP HIS MIND. THIS WOULD BE THE LAST TIME HE WOULD GO TO NEW ORLEANS FOR MARSH BRAD WOLF AND SET IN THIS CROWDED CAPE...WHERE HE'D FIRST MET SUZANNE...AND WAIT FOR HER. THIS WOULD BE THE LAST LONELY YEAR HE'D SPEND, DREAMING THROUGH THE SPRING AND SUMMER AND FALL UNTIL FEBRUARY ROLLED AROUND AGAIN AND HE'D PUSH SOUTH FOR ONE HEAVENLY WEEK. YEP, FINE DEAR! WAS LONG ENOUGH. THIS TIME HE WOULD ASK SUZANNE TO MARRY HIM. HE SAT SILENTLY HUNTING HIS SPRING, SEARCHING THE MASKED, COSTUMED THROU FOR SUZANNE'S FAMILIAR FIGURE. AND THEN SHE WAS COMING TOWARD HIM, OUT OF THE HELLARITY AND MADNESS...

SUZANNE... DARLING...

HERBERT...



AND NOW THEY WERE IN EACH OTHER'S ARMS, AND HE WAS HOLDING HER CLOSE AND FEELING HER WONDERFUL WARMTH AND HIS YEAR-LONG DREAM WAS A REALITY ONCE MORE...

SUZANNE... SUZANNE... I THOUGHT ABOUT YOU EVERY DAY... EVERY MINUTE... I WISHED YOU SO...

ON HERBERT A YEAR AGO... IN SUCH A LONG TIME... HOW'VE YOU BEEN...



HERBERT STARED INTO SUSANNE'S EYES...DANCING EYES,THAT SMILED AT HIM FROM BEHIND THE RUBBER MASK SHE WORE...THE SAME MASK SHE'D WORN EVERY YEAR...THE MASK SHE'D WORN WHEN THEY FIRST MET, FIVE YEARS AGO...

HOW HAVE I BEEN, SUSANNE? MY DARLINGST I'VE BEEN SOBER... I'VE BEEN *CRAZY*...THERE'S ONE ABOUT YOU...I WON'T LET YOU GO THIS TIME, BUT...I WON'T LET YOU GO...EVER AGAIN.

HUSH MY SWEET, WE HAVE A WHOLE WONDERFUL WEEK AHEAD OF US...

I DON'T WANT A WEEK, DON'T FALS, I WANT *HEFT* FEAR, AND THE YEAR AFTER THAT...A WHOLE *LOVE-TIME* TOGETHER!



DON'T SAY ANYTHING, NOW. DANCE WITH ME...

HERBERT FOLLOWED SUSANNE TO THE CROWDED DANCE FLOOR, BEHIND HIS OWN MASK, HE COULD FEEL HIS FACE GROW WARM...THE PERSPIRATION FLOWING. HE HELD HER CLOSE, WRINGING...

LET'S GET OUT OF HERE, THERE'S SOMETHING TO TALK ABOUT, HERE, IS THERE?



HE LOOKED AT HER, BLUETING IT OUT...



I WANT TO ASK YOU TO MARRY ME, EVE...

HERBIE...

THIS WASN'T THE WAY HE'D PLANNED IT AT ALL! NOT HERE ON THIS JAMMED DANCE FLOOR IN THIS NOISY SMOKEY CAFE. HERBERT HAD DREAMED OF A QUIET SPOT ALONG THE LAKE BENEATH MOSS-LADEN TREES THERE...A ROMANTIC PLACE...TO PROPOSE, BUT NOW IT WAS OUT...AND DONE...



YOU...YOU REALLY WANT TO MARRY ME, HERBERT...WITH-OUT EVEN KNOWING WHAT I LOOK LIKE...?

I KNOW THAT I LOVE YOU, BUT...AND THAT YOU LOVE ME. THAT'S WHAT'S IMPORTANT...

THEY'D STOPPED DANCING NOW, SHE AND HERBERT. THEY STOOD THERE, STARING INTO EACH OTHER'S EYES, KIDDED BY THE WAY CROSS...



ARE YOU SURE, HERBIE, DEAR? SUPPOSE, BEHIND THIS MASK, I WAS NOT AS YOU PICTURE ME. SUPPOSE I WAS...

YOU'LL NEVER BE ANYTHING BUT BEAUTIFUL TO ME, EVE, NO MATTER WHAT YOU LOOK LIKE IT DOESN'T EVEN MATTER...

SHE TOOK HIS HAND...LED HIM FROM THE DANCE FLOOR...LED HIM THROUGH THE CROWD AND OUT OF THE CAFE INTO THE DREAMING, FLESH-FILLED, RAINY-COLORED STREET.



OH, HERBIE, I'VE WASTED FIVE YEARS FOR YOU TO SAY THAT...

WE'VE WASTED SO MUCH TIME, MY SWEET, I'VE WANTED TO SAY IT FOR FIVE YEARS...

AND NOW THE MADNESS AND THE NOISE AND THE MURMURING WERE FAR BEHIND. OVERHEAD, STARS PEERED THROUGH BOWED CYPRASSES, AND THE LAKE WAS A MIRROR OF BLACK...

NOW THAT WE'RE AWAY FROM THE GARDENS AND THE DIN...  
ASK ME AGAIN...

MARRY ME, SUE. I LOVE YOU...



HE REACHED FOR HER HAIR... TO LIFT IT AWAY... SO HE COULD TOUCH HER HAIR WITH HIS. SHE GRABED HIS HAIR...

NO, HERBIE! DON'T! YOU SAID IT DIDN'T MATTER...

IT DOESN'T, HONEY. I JUST WANT TO KISS YOU...



MARRY ME FIRST, HERBIE. THEN WE CAN UNMASK... WHEN WE HAVE OUR LOVE COMPLETE.

HOW? TOMORROW?



WE COULD RENT A CAR... DRIVE UPSTATE. WE COULD FIND A JUSTICE OF THE PEACE...

LET'S GO...



THEY RAN, HAND IN HAND... LIKE CHILDREN. AND SOON, NEW ORLEANS WAS JUST A DRY GLOW TO THE SOUTH. AND THEY WERE HUMMING UPSTATE IN A HITCHED CAR... LIKE TWO PHANTOMS...

THERE, DARLING! THERE'S A SIGN...

A.M. MOORE, JUSTICE OF THE PEACE, MARRIAGES PERFORMED, NO WAITING. THIS IS IT!



THE OLD J.P. PERFORMED THE CEREMONY WITH RAISED EYEBROWS. THIS WAS THE FIRST TIME HE'D EVEN MARRIED A COUPLE WHOSE FACES HE DID NOT SEE, BUT THEN... IT WAS MARRY! READ WILL!

I NOW PRODUCE YOU MAN AND WIFE...





LATER... THE SMALL HOTEL... THE GRINNING BELL-BOY CARRYING THEIR HASTILY PACKED BAGS... LEADING THE NEWLYWEDS TO THEIR ROOM...



UP FROM NEW ORLEANS, EH?

YES... WE WERE JUST MARRIED.

AND NOW... ALONE AT LAST, THE SUDDED EMBARRASSMENT OF THE INTIMATE MOMENT...



WELL, DEAR, DON'T YOU THINK IT'S TIME TO GET A LOOK AT YOUR NEW HUSBAND... AND I...

WELL, HERE! NOT YET, FIRST...

HE WATCHED, HIS HEART BEATING LIKE A TRIP-HAMMER IN HIS CHEST, AS SHE REACHED FOR THE LIGHT, FLICKING IT OFF...



HE COULD SEE HER IN THE DIM HALF-LIGHT FROM THE MOON SHINING OUTSIDE... SILHOUETTED... MOVING LITHELY... BEAUTIFULLY...



AND THEN SHE WAS COMING TOWARD HIM AND HE COULD HEAR HER BREATHING... THE SHORT GASP... EXCITED... PASSIONATE...



LATER... LYING IN THE DARKNESS BESIDE HER, SMOKING A CIGARETTE, HERBIE SMILED...



YOU KNOW, DARLING? I KNOW I NEVER DID GET TO SEE YOUR FACE...

HER BREATHING BECAME HEAVIER... REGULAR. SHE WAS ASLEEP. HERBIE LAY THERE ANWHILE, SMOKING, THE CIGARETTE BURNED DOWN AND HE PUT IT OUT. HIS THOUGHTS DRIFTED BACK ACROSS FIVE YEARS... TO THE FIRST MARCH DEAR WEEK...



I REMEMBER SEEING HER FOR THE FIRST TIME... WEARING THAT REVOLTING MAG-MASK... AND KNOWING THAT SHE WAS BEAUTIFUL...

YEA, THE MASK HAD HIDDEN HER FACE, BUT IT COULDN'T HIDE HER LOVELY VOICE. HER SMILING EYES AND HER YOUNG CURVACEOUS FIGURE MADE THE MASK SEEM SO OUT OF PLACE.



"CAPE TO DANCE...?"

"LOVE TO."

HE REMEMBERED HOW THEY'D DANCED THAT FIRST NIGHT, NUMBER AFTER NUMBER, UNTIL THE CROWD HAD GONE AND THE MUSIC HAD ENDED...



"CLOSING UP, NOW..."

"OH..."

"LET'S WALK..."

AND HE REMEMBERED HOW THEY'D TALKED BY THE LAKE BENEATH THE CYPRESSES AND WATCHED THE SUN COME UP...



"TOMORROW, I GO BACK HOME..."

"WILL YOU COME NEXT YEAR... TO MARY'S CAFE?"

HENRIE REMEMBERED HOW HE'D TRIED TO UNMASK HER THAT FIRST TIME.



"BUT I'LL GO AWAY WITHOUT EVER KNOWING WHAT YOU REALLY LOOK LIKE..."

"IT'S BETTER THAT WAY, HENRIE. YOU'LL REMEMBER ME AS YOU IMAGINE ME. FANTASY IS SOMETIMES MORE DESIRABLE THAN REALITY!"

AND HE REMEMBERED HOW THEY'D VOWED TO MEET AGAIN THE FOLLOWING YEAR... IN THE SAME CAFE... AND HE'D DREAMED ABOUT HER TILL THEN...



"SUSANNE... YOU REMEMBERED?"

"I DIDN'T THINK YOU'D COME. I'D HOPED... BUT I WAS AFRAID..."

FIVE YEARS. YEAR AFTER YEAR. MEETINGS AND DANCING AND TALKING AND FALLING IN LOVE. AND NOW SHE WAS HIS WIFE. AND—AND—



"AND, BY GOD, I'VE NEVER EVEN SEEN HER FACE..."

HENRIE REACHED FOR THE LAMP ABOVE THE BED. HE DRAPPED IT ON...



"IT DOESN'T REALLY MATTER, DOES IT? REALLY? IT'S JUST THAT, THAT..."

**GOOD LORD!**



HERBIE REACHED OVERHEENTLY...  
UNTIEING THE SILK CORD THAT  
HELD BUE'S MASK IN PLACE...



HE LIFTED THE MASK AWAY...



THERE WAS NO DIFFERENCE, THE FACE...THE  
MASK...THEY WERE THE SAME...



HERBIE SAT BOLT UPRIGHT IN THE DARKNESS... DAWDLE.  
HE WAS WET AND CLAMMY AND RELIEVED...



HE GLANCED AT THE WOMAN SLEEPING BESIDE HIM... A  
COLD SHIVER OF FEAR RIPPLED UP HIS SPINE...



HE REACHED FOR THE LIGHT... NERVOUSLY BREATHING...



THE MASK... SHE'S STILL  
WEARING HER MASK... JUST  
LIKE IN MY DREAM...



HERBIE STRUGGLED WITH THE  
STRIPS... PULLING IT... RIPPING IT...

BLAST IT...

NOVA... THERE'S  
STOP...



SUE LOOKED UP AT HIM WITH TERROR  
IN HER EYES. HE CLAWED AT THE  
MASK...

DON'T, HERBIE!  
DON'T TRY TO  
TAKE IT OFF!

IT'S TIME I  
SAY, BUT  
IT'S  
TIME!



HE WAS A WILD MAN NOW... HIS FINGERS DIGGING IN...  
TUGGING... PULLING... FRIGHTENED BY THE DREAM... HE  
HAD TO KNOW...

NO, HERBIE! I BEG  
OF YOU! YOU SAID  
IT DOESN'T MATTER.  
YOU SAID...

IT DOES  
MATTER... NOW



A FINAL, DESPERATE, ANGRY PULL...

THEN... SUE'S SCREAM OF PROTEST... BLOOD-CURDLING...  
MYSTERY... AND THE MASK COMES AWAY...

NO! NO! EEEEEEEEEEE...

NOW...  
WE'LL  
SEE...



HE HELD THE SOFT WET COVERING IN HIS HANDS, STARING DOWN AT HER.  
HER BLOOD FLOODED OUT OVER THE PILLOW. HER BARE FLESH GLOVERED  
LIVERLILY. HER EYES BLAZED. HER BICKLY GRIMACING MOUTH... NOW  
STRIPPED OF ITS FLESH LIPS... CROOKED OUT THE WORDS AS HIS  
STOMACH HEAVED...

I... BUNBLE... NEVER... MORE... A MASK...  
HE BEG...

CHOKER...



WATCH IT, HERBIE. THAT'S SUE'S SKIN  
YOU HAVE IN YOUR HAND! DON'T FLUNG  
IT FROM YOU LIKE THAT! WE MAY  
LOSE FACE! WELL, HERBIE... THAT'S  
MY CONTRIBUTION TO THE CRYPT-  
KEEPER'S WAR FOR THIS TIME. I'LL  
SEE YOU NEXT IN MY WAR, THE  
FAULT OF HORROR. BUT BEFORE I  
TURN YOU BACK TO C. E., SOME SOUND

ADVICE. DON'T TRY  
TO REMOVE A GUY'S  
MASK AT GUNTER TILL  
YOU'RE SURE HE'S  
WEARING ONE, OR  
YOU MAY BE STUCK  
WITH THE CHEEK!



**WE AT E.C. ARE PROUDEST  
OF OUR SCIENCE - FICTION  
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**FANTASY**

# WEIRD SCIENCE



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As he poised on the edge of the lake, Stan Albert chuckled aloud. This Mr. Karin was a real smart joe. He realized that a small expenditure can often bring fabulous returns if you're not wishy-washy about using methods that are slightly illegal. His offer to Stan was a good example of a shrewd operator skirting with ethics in order to win a potful of money. Stan tensed and his bronzed body arched in a neat dive; hardly a ripple signaled his entry into the water. With powerful strokes he slid quickly under the surface, to the spot where Karin and this dope Foster were fishing from their rowboats. All he had to do for the \$500, Stanley reflected as he surged forward underwater, was detach the bait from Foster's fishing line, so that Karin could land a bigger catch. There was \$5,000 riding on the contest . . . the man to bring in the larger fish would pocket as much as Stan ordinarily made in a year! Smart of Karin to offer half-a-grand just to make the bet less of a gamble for himself! The easiest dough Stan Albert had ever made!

In the greenish water Stan saw Foster's hook: with a powerful surge Stan slipped through the depths toward the object of his pact with Karin. 500 bucks, Stanley thought as he reached out and steadied Foster's bobbing line . . . just to help a man win a contest! A small fortune to make certain that the right man brought in a bigger fish than his opponent!

Carefully, his fingers moving with

great delicacy, Stan began to slide the bait free. This guy Foster was a chiseler, too, Stan grinned. His hook was bigger than had been agreed on; this was a battle between two unscrupulous operators. And he stood to profit from the contest!

Now the bait was almost off the hook, and Stan felt his chest tightening as his lungs clamored for fresh air. The bait was caught on the bent part of the hook and Stan gave a tug to wrench it free. Another 30 seconds was all he could endure without coming to the surface . . . he'd have to throw discretion to the winds and pull the hook good and hard!

Suddenly the line became taut under his fingers and Stan felt the hook slithering free. With surprise he was aware of the glittering metal moving upward. Then a ripping sensation at his throat sent a spasm of pain stabbing through his body. The big hook had become cruelly imbedded in Stan's throat and was tearing the tender skin open with each passing second. Already the water was becoming discolored with the reddish fluid pouring from his gaping wound!

Stan felt himself growing faint as he struggled futilely to escape the torturous hook, and as the life drained swiftly from his writhing body he was dimly aware that he was being lifted laboriously toward the surface. All around him the water had become a swirling mass of blood . . . his fingers were losing all feeling . . . the taste in his mouth was hot, acid, gagging.

In his last moment, before darkness closed in and blotted out Stan Albert's shuddering agony, he knew that Foster . . . working frantically to pull in his line . . . had caught himself a really big fish!



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# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Heh, heh! Seems that our Horror Mt. Parade has created quite a stir among you keep-keepers! Here are the latest contributions to our collection, courtesy of Nelson Bridwell of Oklahoma City, Okla., Minna Hughes of Mayville, Ky., Dick Bowman of Glenbrook, Wn., Patrick McKernan of Greensboro, Pa., Emanuel Peles of Brooklyn, N. Y., Richard Reamer of Staten Island, N. Y., One Barton of Manassas, N. Y., Roger Todaki of Fresno Falls, Calif., Les Randall of Brooklyn, N. Y., and Lynn Weber of Woodchill Lake, N. Y.

## OKLAHOMACIDE

BERNARDEL POLEA

A-ROUND THE CORNER

ANNIE GORY

SLAUGHTER ROY

I LOATHE YOU CRUELLY

SUNK-HOUSE BLUES

THE TENNESSEE VAULTS

SOMEBODY ROLLED MY PAL

HOW'RE YOU GONNA KEEP 'EM DOWN ON THE FARM (AFTER THEY'VE READ E.C.)

BETTY NO-HEAD

WHEN JOHNNY COMES MARCHING HOME AGAIN, (HORROR, HORROR!)

I GOT HER SON IN THE MORNING, (TOOK SCARE THAT NIGHT)

SEVERED HEADS AMONG THE GHOULS

WHO MUNCHED ON THAT BODY IN THE COFFIN, (CHUCK, CHUCK)

(THE ONE WITH THE FETTERED VEIL)

WHEN YOU WERE-WOLF

OLD CROAKS AT HOME

CHUCK ME, DRILL ME, SQUISH ME

And while in a musical vein, here are some BOF letters from some of you cats:

Dear Crypty,

Dig this, man! I think your comic books are real gone.

J Formano  
Newark, N. J.

I'd walk a mile for your mag. . . it's real cool!

Judy Albarado  
Chicago, Ill.

Man! That one-a-o-a-ary cool story, "The Wanderer," by Roy Broadbent, in the last cool issue of "Tales From The Crypt," was real cool!

Magister Jim Mason  
Richmond, N. Y.

P.S. Dig that one-a-o-a-ary underbaker!

. . . I want to congratulate you and your "mannes federates" for turning out such super-George shops.

I'd like to start an E.C. fan club. Anyone interested can write to:

Lynn Weber  
Woodchill Lake, N. Y.

Anyone interested can write to US, Legal! Yep, my short editors have informed me that, due to the huge quantity of requests (even!!) the E.C. organization is contemplating starting some sort of fan club. The best minds (?) are now busy at work contemplating. Further announcements will be forthcoming when the contemplations have been completed. But don't worry, it'll cost money! See THE VAULT OF HORROR No. 23 for the next exciting episode in this latest money-grubbing effort!

Dear Crypt Keeper,

If someone doesn't have enough sense to buy E.C., then he's probably too stupid to understand them anyway.

Rob West  
Oklahoma City, Okla.

I can't help thinking how much Shakespeare missed by not reading or writing stories like yours. They're super!

Ronald Frager  
Dayton, Ohio

How is the heck could a human live in the same apartment with a corpse for almost two months? I'm referring to "Cemetery Bled" . . . in T.C. No. 26. Wouldn't it . . . well . . . kind of smell? Certainly, when Mrs. Clayton called upon Mr. Burton, and he opened the door wide open, wouldn't she have smelled the smell from the smell? If not, please explain.

Jack Lova  
San Antonio, Texas

Cryptophyl?

Dear C.E.,

You have forgotten an important character in horror literature . . . the GHOUL. Won't you try to put a GHOULish story in your books?

Dorothy Simpson  
Andover, Pa.

We may oblige you sooner than you think, Crypty!

In closing, the usual commercial announcement: The third annual TALE OF TERROR, E.C.'s longest anthology, 128 pages of chills (!), contains complete stories (seven) not counting 4 brief . . . capsules from 1957 . . . is now available for 15c, your name, and your address! Subscribers to any E.C. mag will cost you the smallest of price at 75c . . . 5¢ of a dollar . . . for air . . . half a dozen . . . copies (E.C. fan club? They're still contemplating!) Address where you send for all this shiver . . . or where YOU send US shiver . . . to:

The Crypt Keeper  
Room 706, Dept. 28  
225 Lafayette St.  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

# ERNIE VISITED THE DOCTOR BUT NEVER EXPECTED THE **LAST LAUGH**



ERNIE SHIFTED UNCOMFORTABLY ON THE LEATHER CHAIR IN THE DOCTOR'S WAITING ROOM. FROM TIME TO TIME, THE EXPRESSION ON HIS LOOSE FLABBY-FEATURED FACE WOULD CHANGE FROM ONE OF ANXIETY TO THAT OF A CHEERFUL SMILE, AND HE WOULD CHUCKLE SILENTLY OR LAUGH OUT LOUD. WHEN THAT HAPPENED, HE WOULD CLUTCH HIS STOMACH AND THE SMILE WOULD FADE AND THE ANXIETY WOULD RETURN ONCE MORE. HE THROSE HIS HEAD BACK AFTER HIS MOST RECENT OUTBURST OF HILARITY AND LOOKED UP WITH RELIEF AS DOCTOR FALGER ENTERED.





THE DOCTOR BENT OVER THE SINK AND BEGAN TO WASH HIS HANDS...

STRAINED YOURSELF, MR. CEELEY? NOW? OH... IF YOU'LL PLEASE REMOVE YOUR SHIRT...

SURE, DOC! YEAH, THAT'S WHAT I FIGURE HAPPENED FOR SEE, DOC... I GO FOR PAIN!



DON FALDER LOOKED AT ERNE QUIETLY AS HE DROPPED HIS SCRUBBED HANDS...

SO FOR PAIN, MR. CEELEY? I DON'T UNDERSTAND.

PAIN, DOC! LARGEST LARGE CHARGES? I GET A BANG-OUT OF JOKES! PRACTICAL JOKES...



THE DOCTOR SLIPPED INTO HIS WHITE LAB COAT...

OH, I SEE!

MY LAST WHEN I NEARLY DIED LAUGHING! I PULLED THIS GAS, SEE AND I FIGURE I STRAINED MYSELF LAUGHING OVER IT.



ERNE STOOD BEFORE THE DOCTOR, STRIPPED TO THE WAIST... THE EXAMINING ROOM LIGHTS REFLECTING ON HIS OBERON SMOO. DOC FALDER PLACED HIS STETHO-SCOPE TO HIS EAR...

DO YOU'RE A PRACTICAL JOKER, ER, MR. CEELEY? WHAT SORT OF PRACTICAL JOKERY?

AM, YOU KNOW, DOC. STUFF LIKE I CALL UP A NUMBER, AM OLD NUMBER. SOME NIGHT...



AND I SAY...

THIS IS THE ELECTRIC COMPANY, MACHA. WE'RE CHECKING ON THE STREET LAMPS IN YOUR AREA. WOULD YOU KINDLY LOOK AND SEE IF THE STREET LAMP OUTSIDE YOUR HOUSE IS LIT?

OF COURSE. HOLD ON, PLEASE...



DO THE SUCKER BOYS, SEE, AM WHEN THEY COME BACK THEY SAY...

YES. THE STREET LAMP OUTSIDE MY HOUSE IS LIT.

WELL, BE SURE TO PUT IT OUT BEFORE YOU GO TO BED, HUH, HONEY? YEAH.



ERNE BEGAN TO LAUGH UPRIGHTLY...

THEY HUH. THEY FALL FOR IT EVERY TIME, DOC... HUH, HUH. THEY... OOOOHH! IT HURTS...

BREATHE DEEPLY AND HOLD IT.



THE DOCTOR MOVED THE STETHOSCOPE ABOUT ERNIE'S CHEST, LISTENING GRIMLY...

ALL RIGHT, ERNIE. SO ON, MR. SEELY.

OR I CALL UP A CANDY STORE.



"AM I SAY"

ROBERT CANDY STORE? YOU GOT PHILIP MORRIS IN A CARTON?

YES, SIR!

WELL, LET 'EM OUT, HUNT ME DOWN, MY OWNERS GETTING COLD.



THE DOCTOR FOLDED AWAY HIS STETHOSCOPE AS ERNIE SUFFERED HEARTILY AGAIN...

STUFF LIKE THAT. HEH, HEH! WHAT A BUST! HEH, HEH! I OOOOOOH

AND LAST WEEK? YOU SAY LAST WEEK YOU SEEMED TO STRAIN YOURSELF?



DOCTOR FALDER WRAPPED THE BLOOD-PRESSURE GAG AROUND ERNIE'S ARM. ERNIE MOODED, GRIMACING...

DOO! LAST WEEK I PULLED THE GREATEST... THE HONEST. THE BEST FAR I EVER PULLED. I TELL YOU... I NEARLY DIED LAUGHING!

AND WHAT WAS THAT, MR. SEELY?



ERNE STARTED TO CHUCKLE...

I GET THE IDEA, BUT I NOTICE THAT THE FIDS IN THIS HERE ALL PLAY DOWN BY THE RAILROAD TRACKS. AM I NOTICE THAT THE LIMITED GOES THROUGH, SOM' ABOUT SEVENTH, EVERY DAY AT NOON.



"SO LAST WEEK, I BUY ME SOME HUNKS OF HORSE-MEAT. REAL CHEAP STUFF. AND AN' BAW AN' BLOOD. AN' I BUY ME SOME KID'S CLOTHES. AN' I STUFF THE MEAT IN THE KID'S CLOTHES AND I GO DOWN TO THE TRACKS ABOUT NOON AND I LAY THE MEAT ON THE TRACKS NEAR WHERE SOME KID IS PLAYIN'."





ERDIE WENT OUT INTO THE WAIT-  
ING ROOM AND SAT DOWN. HE  
COULD HEAR DOCTOR PALDER MOVING  
EQUIPMENT AROUND BEHIND THE  
CLOSED EXAMINATION ROOM DOOR...

JUST RELAX, MR.  
CEELY. I'LL BE  
READY FOR YOU  
SHORTLY.

OHAY,  
DOCT?

FIFTEEN MINUTES WENT BY. ERDIE  
BEGAN TO SHOW IMPATIENCE. TWENTY  
MINUTES, ERDIE FELT A PUNNY  
PIERCING PAIN IN HIS STOMACH.  
THIRTY MINUTES, FINALLY...

I'M READIN',  
CEELY. WILL  
YOU COME IN  
NOW?

DOCT SOMETHIN'  
HAP-  
PENIN' HERE?  
IT HURTS... EVEN  
WHEN I DON'T  
LAUGH, DOCT...

ERDIE FOLLOWED THE DOCTOR INTO  
THE EXAMINATION ROOM ONCE MORE.

GET COMPLETELY  
UNDRESSED, MR.  
CEELY... HAVE FOR YOUR  
SHORTS? AND WHILE  
YOU'RE DOING THAT,  
LISTEN TO WHAT I  
HAVE TO SAY...

OHAY, DOCT,  
BUT ARE  
WHAT YOU  
CAN DO  
ABOUT THESE  
NEW PAINS  
I GOT ACHIN'?

THE DOCTOR NODDED SPILLY, WATCHING ERDIE DIS-  
ROBE. HE BEGAN TO TALK...

THERE WAS A FAMILY IN THIS  
TOWN, MR. CEELY? A MOTHER,  
A FATHER, AND TWO CHILDREN...  
BOYS... ONE, EIGHT... THE YOUNG  
ONE, THREE...

CAN'T STAND  
RIGHT BOY, YOU  
SHOULD HAVE  
SEEN THEIR  
FACES WHEN  
THEY SAW THAT  
BLOODY MESS...



BUT THE EIGHT-YEAR-OLD WANDERED AWAY... LEFT THE  
THREE-YEAR-OLD... DISOBEYED HIS MOTHER'S WHINES...  
AND THE THREE-YEAR-OLD GOT ALL BUSY PLAYING  
WHERE HE SHOULDN'T HAVE...

OH, STEVEY? JUST  
LOOK AT YOU!



ONE DAY THE MOTHER SENT HER TWO BOYS OUT TO  
PLAY. SHE TOLD THE EIGHT-YEAR-OLD TO WATCH THE  
THREE-YEAR-OLD AND KEEP HIM OUT OF MESSIER...

SEE THAT STEVEY DOESN'T  
GET HIMSELF DIRTY, JEFFERY.

YES,  
MAMA!



THE EIGHT-YEAR-OLD WENT TO PLAY WITH HIS  
FRIENDS. HE'D COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN ABOUT HIS  
LITTLE THREE-YEAR-OLD BROTHER UNTIL HE HEARD  
A BLOOD-CURLING SCREAM...



JEFFREY THOUGHT THAT THE BLOODY REMAINS LYING UPON THE RAILROAD TRACKS WAS HIS YOUNGER BROTHER, STEVE! HEAN CLUTCHED AT HIS LITTLE EIGHT-YEAR-OLD HEART. HE STARTED RUNNING HOME WILDLY. HE NEVER SAW THE TRUCK.

MA! MA!

LOOK OUT!

THE MOTHER RUSHED OUT OF HER HOUSE WHEN SHE HEARD HER OLDER SON'S SHOUT OF FEAR AND THE SQUEAL OF THE TRUCK'S BRAKES!

JEFFREY MY BABY!

IN HER FRIGHTENED ANXIETY, THE MOTHER'S THOUGHTLESSLY LEFT HER THREE-YEAR-OLD SON IN THE TUB WHERE BATHS BEEN BATHING HIM.

MAMA, DON'T MAMA



ERNIE STOOD, DISORIENTED, BEFORE THE DOCTOR, STAMMERING AT HIS WIDE FLAMING EYES.

YOU?

YES, MR. GEELY, THAT WAS MY FAMILY'S STORY. THE EIGHT-YEAR-OLD DIED FROM BEING STRUCK BY THE TRUCK. THE BABY DROWNED. MY WIFE DROPPED DEAD OF A HEART ATTACK.



DOCTOR FALDEN'S GRIP WAS LIKE A VISE OF STEEL AS HE TIED ERNIE GEELY TO THE EXAMINATION TABLE.

YOU SAY YOU ALMOST DIED LAUGHING WHEN YOUR PRACTICAL JOKE, MR. GEELY? WELL, NOW YOU WILL DIE LAUGHING IF THOSE CAPSULES I GAVE YOU CONTAINED FISH HOOKS... BARBED LITTLE FISH HOOKS...

NO! NO!



DOCTOR FALDEN ROLLED OUT THE EQUIPMENT HE'D PREPARED AND SET IT ABOUT THE STRIPPED RECLINING FIGURE OF SCREAMING ERNIE GEELY. THEN THE DOC TURNED ALL OF THE EQUIPMENT ON. AND THE FEATHERS TWIRLED THE SOLES OF ERNIE'S FEET AND HUGGED HIS BUMB AND UNDER HIS ARMS AND BEHIND HIS EARS...

DIE LAUGHING, ERNIE! DIE LAUGHING!

NEN NEN NO NEN NO

YAAAAAAHHH!

NEN NEN



AND SO WE LEAVE ERNIE GEELY WITH THE LITTLE FISH HOOKS IN HIS GUTTERING STOMACH, KNOWING FULL WELL THAT THE DOC WILL MAKE SURE ERNIE GETS THE POINT OF THIS ONE... BARBED POINTS! IN FACT, ERNIE... THIS LAST ONE WILL KILL YOU AND NOW, THE OLD BITCH SMITS WITH HER RETTLE OF FRABLY, KREEP-KROOERY.

ONE, TWOFOUR, ERNIE JUST HAS HIS LAST BELLER LAUGH! A HEAL RIB-TICKLER. GOODBYE HIS BOY, HE DID!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

WEE, WEE! AND NOW THAT YOUR APPETITES FOR HORROR HAVE BEEN SUFFICIENTLY PICKED BY MY FELLOW BLINK-BLINKERS...E.K. AND V.K., IT'S TIME FOR ME TO FEED YOU FOUL FARE. SO NOW INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR, FIENDS, AND YOUR HOSTESS IN HEAVEN, THE OLD WITON, WILL GIBB OUT THE DELICIOUS DELVING INTO THE DELIRIOUS, CALLED—

## MOURNIN' MESS

THE CEMETERY LAY SILENT BENEATH A COLD MOON THAT HIPPED IN AND OUT FROM BEHIND DARK CLOUDS THAT RACED ALONG ON A BRISK NOVEMBER WIND. BELOW, THE MUFFLED SOUNDS OF DIGGING ECHOED INTO THE NIGHT. A MAN STOOD KNEE-DEEP IN AN EXCAVATION AMONG THE FLAT PLAINLY-MARKED GRAVES, ANXIOUSLY SINKING HIS SPADE INTO THE SOFT EARTH AND TOSSEING IT ONTO A GROWING PILE BEHIND HIM. EVERY SO OFTEN THE MAN WOULD STOP HIS WORK, LISTEN, AND THEN... HEARING NOTHING...CONTINUE DIGGING...

"I THOUGHT THERE WAS SOMETHING SCREWY ABOUT THE WHOLE SET-UP, RIGHT FROM THE BEGINNING. I FELT IT. NOW I'M GOING TO FIND OUT... FOR SURE."



THE MAN FURIOUSLY SPADED THE BLACK LOAM OUT OF THE EVER-DEEPENING HOLE...ALL THE WHILE MUMBLED TO HIMSELF...

"THE GRATEFUL WOMEN'S SOCIETY"? HMPH! IT SMELLED FUNNY FROM THE START! AN EXPERIENCED REPORTER LEARNS TO SENSE THESE THINGS. AND I SENSED IT... THAT FIRST DAY... AT THE PRESS CONFERENCE IN THE MAYOR'S OFFICE.



"I REMEMBER HOW FORTYFOUR OLD  
MAYOR WERE STOOD BEFORE US AND  
WHISPERED OUT HIS ANNOUNCEMENT...

BENTLEMAN! OUR FAIR CITY HAS  
LOWLY HAS THE PROBLEM OF DIS-  
POSING OF ITS DEPENDENTS AND  
HOMELESS ONES WHO PASS  
AWAY WITH NO FRIENDS OR  
RELATIVES TO PROPERLY  
BURY THEM...

HERE TOFORE, THESE WRETCHED  
UNFORTUNATES HAVE BEEN LAID  
TO REST IN OUR CITY IN POT-  
TER'S FIELDS MAINTAINED BY  
YOUR TAXES. NOW, THIS BAD  
RESPONSIBILITY HAS BEEN TAKEN  
OUT OF YOUR CITY'S HANDS.  
BENTLEMAN...

...MAY I PRESENT FELIX J. COPE-  
HARD, REPRESENTATIVE OF THE  
GRATEFUL MORTUARY SOCIETY,  
WHO WILL TELL YOU OF THE  
WONDERFUL OFFER HIS  
ORGANIZATION HAS MADE. THE  
OFFER I HAVE GRACIOUSLY  
ACCEPTED! MR. COPEHARD...

"I REMEMBER EMPLOYED MR. COPEHARD... EARLY...  
SOFT-SPoken..."

BENTLEMAN, "THE GRATEFUL MORTUARY OUTCASTS,  
AND UNWANTED LAYAWAY SOCIETY", THE  
GRATEFUL MORTUARY SOCIETY FOR SHORT... WAS  
FORMED BY A GROUP OF SUCCESSFUL BUSINESS  
AND PROFESSIONAL MEN WHO FELT THAT THEY  
OWED A DEBT OF GRATITUDE TO THIS FAIR CITY.

ALL THE MEMBERS OF THIS ORGANIZATION CAME TO  
THIS CITY AS DOWN-AND-OUTERS, DRIFTERS, DE-  
PENDENTS, OR JUST PLAIN Bums. BUT HERE, THEY  
FOUND OPPORTUNITY. HERE, THEY FOUND FINAN-  
CIAL SUCCESS. AND SO, IN GRATITUDE, THEY  
HAVE Banded TOGETHER TO AID AND ENDOW  
OTHERS LESS FORTUNATE THAN THEMSELVES...  
OTHER DRIFTERS AND UNWANTED. THEY HAVE  
PURCHASED A SMALL PARCEL OF LAND IN ONE  
OF OUR CITY'S SUBURBS, LANDSCAPED IT... AND  
HAVE TURNED IT INTO A DEMETERY...

...A BEAUTIFUL DEMETERY... WHERE THE POOR  
OUTCASTS WHO HAVE NOT BEEN AS FORTUNATE  
AS THEY MAY BE LAID TO FINAL REST IN  
DIGNITY WHEN THEY PASS FROM OUR  
MORTAL WORLD...

"THE GRATEFUL MORTUARY... WHO PREFER TO REMAIN  
SHORT-SPONS... HAVE CREATED AN EMPLOYMENT FUND  
THROUGH MUTUAL CONTRIBUTIONS, WITH WHICH ALL  
FUNERAL AND DEMETERY UNREPAID EXPENSES WILL  
BE MET. NO LONGER WILL YOUR TAXES BE NEEDED FOR  
THIS PURPOSE. NO LONGER WILL SHODDY POTTER'S  
FIELDS MAR THE BEAUTY OF OUR FAIR CITY'S SUR-  
ROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE. NO LONGER WILL...

"YES, IT SMILES FUNNY ALL RIGHT I REMEMBER LISTENING TO MR. CORPARD HAVE ONE, EXPOUNDING UPON THE WONDERFUL GROUP OF PHILANTHROPISTS HE REPRESENTED... AND I REMEMBER FINALLY ADMIRING."

MY QUESTION, MR. CORP... I HAD TO **WHY** SHOULD A GROUP OF **RICH MEN** SUDDENLY BECOME CONCERNED ABOUT SOME **DERELICTS' FUNERALIST**?

EXPLAINED MR. ALL OF THESE MEN...

YES, YES, THEY WERE **ALL ONCE BOMBS THEMSELVES**. YOU EXPLAINED THAT, BUT **WHY** WAIT UNTIL THESE **DERELICTS DIED** BEFORE HELPING THEM? COULDN'T THE MONEY BE PUT TO **BETTER USE** BY **REHABILITATING** THEM WHILE THEY WERE **ALIVE**?

"THE **GRATEFUL HORRORS**" ARE **ALL SELF-MADE MEN**, SIR. THEY RECEIVED NO HELP WHEN THEY WERE DOWN.

THE **PRESENT** CONDITION OF THE **DERELICT** IN OUR CITY DOES NOT CONCERN THESE MEN. LET THE **DERELICT RISE UP** AS THEY HAVE DONE. BUT WHEN THE **DERELICT CAN NO LONGER RISE** OR WHEN HE HAS **PASSED ON**, THEN LET HIM BE **HONORED IN FINAL REST**...

I STILL DON'T GET IT...

I REMEMBER ATTENDING THAT FIRST FUNERAL... AND BEING "**THE GRATEFUL HORRORS SOCIETY'S**" CEMETERY FOR THE FIRST TIME.

ASHER TO ASHER... DUST TO DUST.

NICE PLACE, BREWSTER.

YEAH, **BEAUTIFUL**! IT ALMOST PAYS TO **DIE PEARLESS**.

"AND I REMEMBER IN THE YEARS THAT FOLLOWED, RETURNING FROM TIME TO TIME AND SEEING THE ROLLING LAWNS WITH THE SIMPLE GRAVE MARKERS."

HOW COME NO GRAVE MARKERS?

I ONLY FOUND HERE, WATER. THE **SOCIETY** SAYS THAT IN THE **MODERN** WAY A CEMETERY SHOULD LOOK... **SO I DO LIKE THEY SAY...**

BUT AFTER A WHILE THE WORD OF "**THE GRATEFUL HORRORS SOCIETY**" BECAME STALE NEWS AND I TURNED TO OTHER THINGS. THEN, THIS MORNING, MY EDITOR CALLED ME IN.

BREWSTER, YOU COVERED THE OPENING OF "**THE GRATEFUL HORRORS SOCIETY'S**" CEMETERY FOR OUTGASTS AND UNWANTED, DIDN'T YOU?

YEAH, CHIEF! WHAT'S UP?

WELL, ACCORDING TO THE **DRIFT DEPARTMENT** THEY'RE BLURTING THE **THOUSANDTH DERELICT** TODAY. TAKE A RUN OUT AND **COVER** IT FOR US, HUH? IT **COULDN'T** BE WORTH A **PARAGRAPH OR TWO**...

SURE, CHIEF! HEY, DID YOU SAY THE **THOUSANDTH DERELICT**?





"AFTER THE GRAVEMEN LEFT, I STOOD A WHILE LOOKING OUT OVER THE ROLLING LAWNS WITH THE SIMPLE MARKERS AND THE NEW FRESH GRAVE-MOUND PUTTING OUT LIKE A SORE THUMB..."



"THAT'S STRANGE!  
VERY STRANGE..."

"I STARTED PACING. I PACED ALONG THE GATE ON THE WEST SIDE OF THE CEMETERY. THEN I PACED ALONG THE GATE ON THE NORTH SIDE..."



"I'M RIGHT. I KNOW I'M RIGHT!"

"I WENT BACK TO THE CAR. I STARTED SCRATCHING AROUND ON MY MIND-PAD... FIGURING..."



"JUST WHAT I THOUGHT!  
THERE ISN'T ENOUGH AREA  
IN THAT CEMETERY FOR A  
THOUSAND GRAVES!"

"THERE WAS SOMETHING FISHY ABOUT THIS MOUND. I KNEW IT. I TOOK A LAST LOOK AT THE SINGLE MOUND AND THE GREENS..."



"THEY MUST  
BE STACKIN'  
THEM ONE  
ABOVE THE  
OTHER...  
UNLESS..."

"AND DROVE TO THE NEAREST SHOPPING SECTION. I STOPPED AT A HARDWARE STORE..."



"I'D LIKE TO BUY A SPADE..."

"I DROVE BACK TO THE CEMETERY AND HAD MY CAR. I SCALED THE FENCE, MOVED A HOME PLACE, AND WAITED... WATCHING IT BECOM DARK..."



"I'LL FIND OUT. I'LL FIND  
OUT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT!"

"AND THEN, SOMETHING HAPPENED. SOMETHING WEIRD AND FRIGHTENING. THE MOUND... THE SINGLE GRAVE-MOUND... SUNK DOWN INTO THE EARTH... SUNK DOWN UNTIL IT WAS LEVEL WITH THE SURROUNDING GRASS..."



"GOOD LORD..."

THE CEMETERY LAY SILENT BENEATH A GOLD MOON. THE MUFFLED SOUND OF GRASSING ECHOED INTO THE NIGHT. THE MAN MUMBLED TO HIMSELF AS HE DUG FURIOUSLY...



"SO I'LL FIND OUT WHAT THIS IS ALL ABOUT! I'LL FIND OUT. WHY SHOULD A GRAVE MOUND JUST SINK DOWN... JUST VANISH? WAY?"

THE SOUND OF METAL STRIKING METAL NEVER ENDED IN THE DEEP HOLE THE MAN HAD DUG. HE LOOKED AROUND, CONFUSED...



"METAL? THAT'S FUNNY! THE COFFIN WAS WOOD! AND... HEY! I'M A GOOD SIX FEET DOWN! I SHOULD HAVE HIT THE COFFIN LONG AGO! THIS ISN'T THE COFFIN..."

THE MAN CLEARED THE SOIL AWAY FROM THE METAL FLOOR OF THE GRAVE...



"THE COFFIN IS GONE! THIS... THIS IS A DOOR... A DOOR THAT OPENS DOWNWARD!"

THE MAN STOOD UP IN THE GRAVE. HE STARED AT THE OLD HOUSE NEARBY, BEYOND THE CEMETERY GATES. THERE WERE LIGHTS ON INSIDE IT, SHINING THROUGH SHADED WINDOWS...



"NOW I GET IT! NOW I GET IT! THE HATEFUL HOBGODS..."

SUDDENLY THE METAL FLOOR BENEATH THE MAN'S FEET COLLAPSED AND HE PLUMMETED DOWNWARD...



"GOOD EVENING, MR. SWEENEY. I THOUGHT I HEARD YOU KNOWING..."



"DOWNWARD!"

"IT IS TOO BAD THAT YOU DISCOVERED OUR LITTLE SECRET, MR. SWEENEY."



"THIS IS HOW YOU CAN BURY A THOUSAND BODIES IN A CEMETERY THAT COULDN'T HOLD SIX HUNDRED."

EXACTLY, MR. SWEENEY,  
AND NOW, IF YOU WILL  
LEAD THE WAY  
SHOWING THIS MAN I  
HAVE HERE... I WILL  
SHOW YOU OUR  
INTRIGATE UNDER-  
GROUND NETWORK

BUT WHY?  
WHY ALL  
THIS?

AS A MATTER  
OF FACT, MR.  
SWEENEY, WE  
BUT THE IDEA  
FROM A COMIC  
MAGAZINE! NO...  
NOTICE THAT THERE  
IS A STEEL TRAP  
DOOR BENEATH  
EACH BRASS  
LOCATION. ALL  
THIS ELIMINATED  
SHEDDING, YOU SEE!

THAT'S WHY  
THE MOON  
SUNK DOWN!  
ER... YOU SAY  
YOU GOT THE  
IDEA FROM A  
COMIC  
MAGAZINE?

YES! A HORROR  
MAGAZINE... 'TALES  
FROM THE CRYPT',  
I BELIEVE IN IT  
WAS A STORY CALLED  
'MIDNIGHT MESSY'  
UP THOSE STAIRS,  
PLEASE

'MIDNIGHT  
MESSY'?  
WHAT WAS IT  
ABOUT?

IT WAS ABOUT AN ORGANIZATION OF  
VAMPIRES WHO ESTABLISHED A  
RESTAURANT WHERE THEY COULD  
GET THE BLOOD THEY NEEDED  
THROUGH THAT DOOR PLEASE

THE GRATEFUL  
HORROR??  
VAMPIRES??

OH, NO, MR. SWEENEY. WE MERELY  
APPLIED THE STORY TO OUR  
OWN NEEDS. ALL WE DID WAS  
BUY THIS HOUSE, AND... IN  
THERE, PLEASE...

WOOD LOUD?

THERE WERE TWENTY OR THIRTY OF THEM... SITTING ABOUT THE HIDE  
BANSNET TABLE... PATTING THEIR MOUTHS WITH THEIR NAPKINS...

MEET THE 'GRATEFUL HORROR, OUTCASTS  
AND UNWANTEDS' LAYAWAY SOCIETY, MR.  
SWEENEY. WE ARE WHAT OUR  
INITIALS STAND FOR.

CHOICE...  
**GHOULS**

'AHH, HEE, HEE!' SEE, BOOM,  
BEAN! STICK 'EM IN THE ARSE  
DAN! 'HEE HONES ARE PICKED  
CLEAN!' 'HEE, HEE! THAT'S THE  
ORGANIZATION'S, OVER, CHEERS!  
NO CHOKING! AND NOW, IT'S TIME  
TO PUT OUT THE FIRE UNDER MY  
GRANDY CAULDRON AND CLOSE  
THE DOOR TO MY REERING  
RESTAURANT FOR FARTY  
TERROR TER-



BOYS. WE'LL  
ALL SEE YOU  
NEXT IN THE  
WALK OF  
HORROR. TILL  
THEN, GET YOUR  
DIRTY MOUTH  
READ THIS WHOLE  
FAB OVER AGAIN!  
I DARE YOU!

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CANADA

# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

®

FEATURING



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER





# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEN, HEN! SO YOU'RE BACK FOR MORE GORE, EN-FEENOS? WELL, THIS IS THE SPOT FOR IT! WELCOME TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO START THE BRINE ROLLING IN MY REEKING BAG WITH ANOTHER SPINE-TINGLING TALE FROM MY GREEP-COLLECTION. TIGHTEN YOUR BELTS SO YOU WON'T BE SCARED OUT OF YOUR PARTS, AND I'LL BEGIN THE BLOOD-GORGLED I TELL...

## UNDERTAKING PALOR



MR. KROCK'S BLACK PANEL TRUCK HAD PULLED UP BEFORE HIS MORTUARY, AND SOMEHOW HED GOTTEN THE SILENT WICKER WITH ITS BRISTLY CONTENTS INSIDE. WHILE OUT IN THE LITTER-STRAWN BACK YARD THE KIDS HAD CRAFT TO THE BACK WINDOW ON TIP-TOES, LIKE SO MANY GREY SHADOWS, LIKE SO MANY MICE. THEY'D PEERED INTO THE PORCELAIN AND GLASS-LINED UNDERTAKING PALOR WITH WIDE EYES AND CHATTERING TEETH, WHISPERING...

THAT'S OLD MAN KROCK'S HE DIED YESTERDAY!

MR. KROCK'S GETTIN' READY TO BRUSH UP HIS

I DON'T WANT TO LOOK AT IT!

SHHH!

THERE IS A HORROR CURIOUSITY IN CHILDREN, A STRANGE FASCINATION WITH DEATH. IT HURRIES THEM TO THE SCENES OF ACCIDENTS, SUCKS THEM INTO MOVIE THEATERS TO WATCH IT UNFOLD ON SILVER SCREENS, PROMPTS THEM TO MARK-BELIEVE ABOUT IT... AND DRAWS THEM TO WINDOWS IN UNDERTAKING PARLORS.



DEATH IS THE UNKNOWN IN THE LIFE EQUATION. IT IS THE ULTIMATE FINAL RESULT OF EVERY LIVING EXAMPLE. IT IS THE UNANSWERABLE TO YOUNG MINDS SEARCHING FOR ANSWERS.



SO IT WAS ONLY NATURAL FOR CHERRY AND PETE AND BILLY AND PERCIVAL TO WANT TO SEE MORE OF THIS UNFATHOMABLE PROBLEM... TO WANT TO LEARN WHAT WENT ON BEHIND MR. ESPROCK'S CLOSED MORTUARY DOORS.



INSIDE THE MORTUARY, OBVIOUS TO THE WIDE PRYING EYES THAT FOLLOWED HIS EVERY MOVE, AVERILL ESPROCK LABORED SLOWLY, DELIBERATELY, AS IF HE ENJOYED HIS WORK.



AND AS HE WORKED, AVERILL HUMMED SOFTLY, FILLING THE MORTUARY WITH HIS MATED GREEN BUDDY.



THE PUMP BEGAN TO CRUISE, GURGLES THE SCARLET LIQUID OUT OF THE DEAD BODY THROUGH THE PULSATING TUBE AND SENDS IT INTO THE PORCELAIN SINK.



AFTER A WHILE THE GURGLES STOPPED AND THE PUMP RAN QUIETLY.



MR. ESPROCK RINERS THE HOSE THAT RAN OFF INTO THE RED-STAINED PORCELAIN SINK AND PUSHED IT INTO THE NECK OF THE JUB WITH THE COLORLESS LIQUID...

I'LL BET A NICKEL THAT'S EMERALMIN FLUID!

I'LL BET YOU'RE RIGHT!

I'M GONNA HOME, MY PAW'S BEEN DYIN' AND...

STICK AROUND, PERCY!



AVERRILL PRESSED A SWITCH. THE PUMP REVERSED ITSELF. THE GURGLING BEGAN AGAIN. THE COLORLESS LIQUID IN THE JUG BEGAN TO SLOWLY DISAPPEAR, FORCED INTO MR. GROWER'S EMPTY ARTERIES...

SEE? WHAT I TELL YOU!

GRAY, SMART GUY? SO YOU KNOW EVERYTHING?

REALLY, FELLERS, POP'S BEEN IN BED, AN...

STICK AROUND, PERCY!



THE LAST DROP OF THE EMERALMIN FLUID GARGLED OUT OF THE JUG AS THE LAST DROP OF A SOGA IS SUCKED FROM A FOUNTAIN GLASS THROUGH A FRAYED STRAW. MR. ESPROCK SAUT OFF THE MOTOR...

IS HE DONE?

WAIT AN SEC?

LISTEN. SOMEONE JUST CAME IN THE FRONT DOOR!



SOMEWHERE IN THE MORTUARY, A BELL TINKLED. MR. ESPROCK STIFFENED. A FIGURE DREPT ASIDE THE CURTAINS AND CAME INTO THE BACK ROOM.

WOWEE, AVERILL! I COME FOR MY GUY!

ANYBODY SEE YOU COME IN, MORT?



THE KIDS, PEERING THROUGH THEIR PEEP-HOLE, WHISPERED EXCITEDLY...

IT'S MR. GROWER, THE DROGIST! WHAT'S HE WANT?

LISTEN! MAYBE WE'LL FIND OUT!



NOPE... NOBODY SAW ME. HOW MUCH DO WE MAKE THIS TIME?

FIFTY BUCKS EACH? THAT'S THE BEST I COULD DO! THE BROOKS' FAMILY DON'T HAVE MUCH MONEY. I FINALLY TALKED 'EM INTO THE TWO HUNDRED DOLLAR FUNERAL. I CLEAR A HUNDRED ON THAT ONE!



FIFTY BUCKS? FOR DYEIN' OUT LOUD, IT DON'T PAY TO TAKE SUCH CHANCES FOR THAT LITTLE DOWNS.

WELL, NEXT TIME YOU POISON A PRESCRIPTION, MAKE SURE IT'S FOR SOMEBODY WHO CAN AFFORD A BIG FUNERAL...







AFTER CHERRY LEFT, PETE TOLD HIS PLAN TO BILLY, THEN THEY WENT AROUND TO THE FRONT OF MR. ESPROCK'S MORTUARY AND WAITED. THEY WAITED UNTIL MR. ESPROCK CAME OUT.

MR. MR. ESPROCK...  
HOW 'S THAT?  
YOU DON'T SAY, WHAT'S WRONG?  
LOOK SO GOOD, MR. ESPROCK?



YOU LOOK PALE, MR. ESPROCK. YOU LOOK SICK!  
YOU COMIN' DOWN WITH SOMETHIN', MR. ESPROCK?  
I DON'T KNOW! I FEEL LIKE I GOTTA RUN DOWN!



MR. ESPROCK WENT BACK INTO THE MORTUARY. THE KIDS DARTED AROUND TO THE BACK WINDOW IN TIME TO HEAR...

HELLO, MORT? AKEBELL? DAN OR... MAYBE YOU'D BETTER SEND THAT TONIC OVER AFTER ALL! I DO FEEL KINDA... KINDA RUN DOWN!



OUTSIDE MR. GRUBBY'S STORE, CHERRY WAITED PATIENTLY. FINALLY, MR. GRUBBY CAME OUT...

HOW'D YOU LIKE TO MAKE A MODEL, CHERRY? DELIVER THIS PACKAGE OVER TO 'MR. ESPROCK' AT THE UNDER-TAKING PARLOR...



CHERRY TOOK THE PACKAGE AND RUSHED STRAIGHT TO THE CLUB HOUSE WITH IT. PETE AND BILLY WERE WAITING...

HERE IT IS!  
GARY, HOLD IT OUT...  
HERE'S THE RAT-POISON...



MR. ESPROCK OPENED THE DOOR TO HIS MORTUARY TO SEE CHERRY STANDING BEFORE HIM, HOLDING A STRAY CAT IN ONE HAND AND THE BOTTLE OF 'TONIC' IN THE OTHER.

MR. GRUBBY ASKED ME TO DELIVER THIS, MR. ESPROCK!  
OH, THANK YOU, CHERRY!



CHERRY HELD OUT THE BOTTLE OF 'TONIC', LETTING IT SLIP FROM HIS FINGERS...

HERE Y'ARE, DOOP!  
LOOK OUT, YOU... GLIMBY...



THE BOTTLE SMASHED INTO A THOUSAND GLITTERING FRAGMENTS AND THE 'TONIC' POOLED OUT OVER THE MORTUARY FLOOR. CHERRY RELEASED THE STRAY CAT...

BILLY? I'M GONNA GET THAT CAT OUT OF HERE!





THE KNIFE IN MR. ESPROCK'S HAND GLINTED IN THE MOONLIGHT...

AVERRILL! DON'T YOU TRY TO KILL ME, GRUENT! WELL, NOW... I'M GOING TO KILL YOU!



MR. ESPROCK SPUN AROUND, THE KNIFE POINTED TIGHTLY IN HIS HAND.

WHO'S THERE!? I WON'T LET'S RUN FOR IT!



SUDDENLY, MR. ESPROCK PLUNGED FORWARD, SPLATTERING HIS HEAD UPON THE SHARP CORNER OF A NEWLY CUT TOMBSTONE...



MR. ESPROCK BROUGHT THE KNIFE DOWN INTO MR. GRUENT'S CHEST. MR. GRUENT'S SCREAM ECHOED THROUGH THE SILENT CEMETERY.



THE KIDS BEGAN TO RUN. MR. ESPROCK SCREAMED AFTER THEM.

COME BACK HERE, YOUNG CHAMPS! I CAN'T GRASP... ANY... FASTER.



AND WHEN THE BOYS CAUTIOUSLY RETURNED TO WHERE HE LAY

HE'S DEAD! LOOK! LOOK AT THE NAME PLATE ON THE HEAD-STONE!



SUDDENLY THE NIGHT WAS VERY STILL, SAVE FOR AVERILL, ESPROCK'S HEART BEATING AS HE STOOD OVER MR. GRUENT'S PROTESTICALLY SPRAWLED BODY. AND THEN...



THEY RAN WILDLY OVER THE GRAVE-MOUNDS... THE THREE TERRIFIED BOYS, WITH BUNGEED MR. ESPROCK CLOSE BEHIND THEM, BRASHING THE BLOODY HAIR...

OUR, GRUENT! I DON'T! I'LL KILL YOU! I SWEAR IF I'LL...



WELL, NOW THERE'S A STRIKING WIND-UP TO A TERRIFYING TALE. EH, CREEPS? NOW, THE NIGHT-KEEPER WAITS WITH HIS TALE OF GHOSTS AND GARGOYLES, SO I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO HIM. I'LL DO YOU LATER, TALKING 'BOUT DIGGING, AS THE FRENCH BEE-BOPPER SAID WHEN HE SAW THE BULLDOZING. 'MAN, DID THAT CRAZY BARBER CHASE!'





# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH. AND NOW, VILFURES, IF YOU WILL MENTURE INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR, YOUR HOST, THE VAULT-KEEPER WILL ENTERTAIN YOU. FOR THIS, MY FINAL FICTIONAL PLEAS, I HAVE CHOSEN A **GRAVE TALE**. YEP? IT'S TOLD BY A **GRAVE**? SO, CUGGLE UP TO THAT CORNER OVER THERE AND I'LL BEGIN THE DRAMA OF DREAD AND DEATH CALLED...

## THE CRAVING GRAVE!



THE WIND BLOWS SADLY ACROSS THE GHAZLED AND BENT TREES AROUND ME. IT WHISPERS PAST THE COLD STONE MONUMENTS THAT THE OTHERS PROUDLY HOLD UPWARD TOWARD THE NIGHT SKY. BUT UPON MY BREAST THERE IS NO COLD STONE FOR THE WIND TO SING OVER. I LIE SILENT WITH AN EMPTINESS WITHIN ME... A TEARFUL. THE OTHERS SIGH CONTENTEDLY, SHIFTING AND CRACKING, EMBRACING THEIR CHARGES... THEIR RIGID CHILDREN... BUT I AM BARREN... FRUITLESS. BENEATH MY WOUNDED OUTER SKIN-CRUST, NO FLESH CHARGE LIES, NESTLING. I AM **LOVELY**. I AM **EMPTY**...



I AM AN **UNOCCUPIED GRAVE**, CRYING WITH THE CRYING WIND... WAITING FOR MY LONELINESS TO END...  
WAITING FOR A **BOY**!

I HAVE WAITED LIKE THIS THROUGH THE CENTURIES, WATCHING THE OTHERS AROUND ME, EACH IN THEIR TURN, OPEN WIDE THEIR YAWNING MOUTHS AND TALK IN THEIR WARDS, CRAGLING THEM HAPPILY WITHIN THEIR EARTH-WOMES.



LOWER THE COFFIN...

SORL, SORL...

ON NIGHTS LIKE THIS ONE... WHEN THE SKY IS OVERCAST WITH LOW HANGING RAIN-CLOUDS, WHEN I CAN SEE NO STARS... I CAN ONLY LIE AND LISTEN TO THE HAPPY CHATTERING OF THE GRAVES AROUND ME, GARRING, PROTECTING, CARING FOR THEIR BROOD. I CAN ONLY LIE AND LISTEN AND YEARN. I YEARN FOR THE DAY WHEN I, TOO, WILL REACH FORTH AND DRAW IN MY DEATH-RETUS AND HOLD IT FAST, DUCKLING IT WITH MY GAMPNESS.



HERE IT IS, WILLIE.

LET'S GET TO IT, AL. NOT MUCH TIME LEFT TILL MORNING!

BUT, WAIT! WHAT IS THAT I HEAR? VOICES IN THE WIND... VOICES OVER MY! AND WHAT IS THAT I FEEL? COLD STEEL PENTING MY CHEST... CRACKING OPEN MY EARTH-SKIN...



WHY DON'T PEOPLE DIE IN THE DOWNCAST... WHEN THE GROUND IS ROFT??

I'LL TELL MY COMRESS-MAN THEY'LL PASS A LAW!

I HAVE LAID FALLOW THROUGH THE FREEZE AND THE THAW, HEAVING THEM MARRING THEIR FOSTER-CHILDREN, AND LONGING FOR MY OWN. ON SUNDAYS, I HAVE LISTENED TO THE MOURNEERS AND REMEMBRERS COME AND CRY UPON THE OTHERS AND PLACE FLOWERS UPON THEIR BEDSOMS.



SORL, SORL...

HE WAS A GOOD MAN...

AND ALWAYS, WHEN THE WIND COMES UP ACROSS THE OTHER GRAVES, IT CARRIES THEIR LAUGHTER TO ME. THEY LAUGH BECAUSE THEY HAVE FULFILLED THEIR PURPOSE. THEY LAUGH BECAUSE THEY ARE NO LONGER EMPTY AND BARREN AND CHILDLESS. THEY LAUGH AT ME...



USE! HARD AS A ROCK!

HERE, USE THE PICK...

THERE IS A THROBBLING DOWN DEEP WITHIN ME... A SURGE OF EXCITEMENT AND ANTICIPATION. THE WIND DIES... AND THE LAUGHTER DIES...



HOW OLD WAS SHE?

SIXTY-THREE...

ALL THESE YEARS OF WAITING! ALL THESE YEARS OF LONGING AND YEARNING AND CRYING... THEY'RE ALMOST OVER. THOSE MEN UPON MY CHEST... THEY'RE BRABE DIS-RENS...



AND NOW IT IS MORNING. I LIE WITH MY INSIDES TORN FROM ME AND HEAPED UP AT MY SIDE. I LIE OPEN, FEELING THE SUNLIGHT. THE COLD AIR. I HEAR THE CRUNCHING STEPS THAT I HAVE HEARD SO OFTEN. HEAR THE GRUNTS OF THE FALLBEARERS THAT HAVE NEVER UNTIL THIS DAY DELIVERED UNTO ME. AND I SMILE.



THE COFFIN IS LOWERED. I REACH UPWARD FOR IT, ACCEPTING IT, FEELING OF ITS SMOOTHNESS, AND SENSING OF ITS CONTENTS... MY DEATH-WARD. MY CORPSE-CHARGE... MY OWN.



THE GRAVE DIGGERS TRUDGE OFF. I AM FULFILLED. THE EMPTEENESS WITHIN ME IS GONE...THE YEARNING VANISHED. THE BODY LIES GUARDED INSIDE ME. I WHISPER TO IT. SOOTHING IT. COMFORTING IT IN ITS FINAL REST.



THE DAYS AND WEEKS PASS, BUT THE BODY WITHIN MY FOLD DOES NOT LIE AT REST. THE BODY WITHIN ME IS NOT AT PEACE. THERE IS A STIRLING INSIDE THE COFFIN NESTLING IN MY BOSOM. A FLUTTERING... A SCRATCHING.



I LISTEN WITH A DRUNKEN JOY TO THE CEREMONY, FEELING THE MOURNERS' FEET UPON MY BREAST. THERE ARE NOT MANY MOURNERS...A MOTHER, HIS WIFE, AND A LAYED-FRIEND. BUT I DO NOT CARE. IT IS NOT THE DROWNING ONES I AM INTERESTED IN. IT IS THE ONE FOR WHOM THEY GRIEVE.



THE MOURNERS LEAVE. THE GRAVE DIGGERS STEP FORWARD WITH THEIR SHOVELS. I EMBRACE THE COFFIN MORE AND MORE AS THEY RETURN. MY SOIL-REWARDS TO ME. THEY STAND, FINALLY, UPON MY REPAIRED BODY, TAMING DOWN MY OUTER SKIN, STITCHING UP THE WOUND.



THE BODY TELLS ME HER STORY. HER NAME IS CYNTHIA MEADOWS. SHE WAS, LIKE ME, LOVELY ALL HER LIFE. SHE'D REMAINED UNMARRIED, BARREN, FRUITLESS. YEARNING FOR THE THING HER MARRIED SISTER HAD.



THE BOY STIRRING WITHIN ME TELLS ME OF THE LONELY YEARS... THE LONGING SHE'D FELT FOR A CHILD OF HER OWN, AND I UNDERSTAND, HADN'T I FELT THE SAME AS SHE?

MAMA SAYS YOU'RE AN OLD MAID, AUNT CYNTHIA. WHAT'S AN OLD MAID?

IT'S... IT'S A WOMAN WHO NEVER MARRIES, ROLAND. A WOMAN WHO HAD NO CHILDREN OF HER OWN.



AND THE EMPTY YEARS HAD CRAWLED BY. AS THEY CRAWLED FOR ME, SHE MADE WISE INVESTMENTS OF THE INHERITANCE SHE'D SHARED WITH HER SISTER, AND SHE'D GROWN WEALTHY, WHILE HER SISTER...

GEORGE'S BUSINESS FAILED, CYNTHIA. HE'S LOST EVERY CENT WE HAD!

I'M SORRY, MYRA. I'LL TRY TO HELP YOU!



MYRA'D FALLEN ILL SUDDENLY, SHE'D DIED WITHIN THE WEEK...

AND SO, THE LONELY YEARS HAD ENDED FOR CYNTHIA AS MY LONELY YEARS HAD ENDED. SHE'D TAKEN ROLAND TO HER BOSOM AS I'D TAKEN HER...

WHAT, SOB. WHAT ABOUT ROLAND, CYNTHIA? WHAT WILL I DO WITH HIM?

I'LL... I'LL LOOK AFTER HIM, GEORGE... IF YOU WANT ME TO.



SHE'D FELT THE LAUGHTER... THE SCORN AROUND HER AS I'D FELT SCORN. SHE'D WATCHED THE OTHER WOMEN SHE KNEW MARRY AND HAVE CHILDREN, AND SHE'D GRIED AS I'D GRIED...

SOB—SOB...

HURRY, EDITH! DINNER'S READY!

YES, MOTHER!



AND SHE'S WAITED THROUGH THE YEARS... AS I'D WAITED... FINALLY...

WHAT IS IT, GEORGE?

IT'S MYRA, CYNTHIA. SHE'S DESPERATELY ILL. PLEASE... COME, QUICKLY!



ROLAND'S ARRIVAL IN CYNTHIA'S HOUSE HAD MEANT THE END OF THE LAUGHTER AROUND HER, THE END OF SCORN... JUST AS HER ARRIVAL HAD MEANT THE END OF SCORN FOR ME...

BUT I WANT MY MOTHER!

YOU MOTHER HAS GONE AWAY, ROLAND. SHE'S GONE AWAY FOR A LONG TIME.



ROLAND? DINNER'S READY, MOTHER.

YES, AUNT CYNTHIA!



CYNTHIA, TOO, HAD BEEN FULFILLED. SHE'D GUARDED ROLAND, COMFORTED HIM, AND HE'D GROWN INTO MANHOOD. BUT THERE WAS A STINGING WITHIN HIM...JUST AS NOW, CYNTHIA STIRS.



I'M LEAVING AWAY, AUNT CYNTHIA. I CAN'T STAY HERE ANY LONGER.

ROLAND? DON'T LEAVE ME! PLEASE.

THE SCORCHING, CLAWING BOOY WITHIN HE TELLS HOW ROLAND HAD LEFT HER, DESPITE HER PLEADING, LEFT HER TO THE LAUGHTER AND THE SCORN AROUND HER ONCE MORE.



SOB, SOB

AND THEN SHE'D DISCOVERED WHY ROLAND HAD LEFT SO SUDDENLY...



THE MONEY! I HAD THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS IN THIS DRAWER. IT'S GONE!

POOR CYNTHIA. HOW SORRY I FEEL FOR HER. TO YEARN FOR SOMETHING...TO YEARN FOR IT FOR SO LONG...TO FINALLY GET IT, AND THEN TO LOSE IT ONCE MORE. SHE TELLS ME OF HOW BROKEN-HEARTED SHE WAS.



ROLAND. SOB... ROLAND.

SHE TELLS ME HOW SHE'D TRIED TO FORGET HIM. SHE TELLS ME HOW HER INVESTMENTS HAD CONTINUED TO MAKE HER WEALTHIER AND WEALTHIER, AND THEN...SIX YEARS LATER...



YES, WHO IS IT? WHO... ROLAND? YOU'VE COME BACK!

YES, AUNT CYNTHIA. AND I'VE BROUGHT SOMEONE.

CYNTHIA'D BEEN SO GLAD TO SEE ROLAND SHE'D COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN THE CRIME HE'D COMMITTED WHEN HE'D LEFT...



THIS IS MY WIFE ERIS, AUNT CYNTHIA. ERIS, THIS IS MY AUNT CYNTHIA...

ROLAND'S TOLD ME SO MUCH ABOUT YOU, AUNT CYNTHIA!

THEY'D COME TO LIVE WITH HER. ROLAND'D BOGGED CYNTHIA'S FORGIVENESS.



I WAS FOOLISH AND FOOLISH, AUNT CYNTHIA. IT WAS WRONG OF ME TO TAKE THE MONEY! I'M SORRY!

THERE, THERE, ROLAND. IT HAPPENED A LONG TIME AGO!

SO ONCE MORE THE LAUGHTER AND BOON AROUND CYNTHIA'S DIED AWAY. ROLAND HAD COME BACK AND HE'S BROUGHT HIS WIFE. CYNTHIA HAD TWO CHILDREN NOW...



YOU DON'T KNOW HOW HAPPY YOU'VE MADE AN OLD LONELY WOMAN, ENIG... ROLAND?

WE BOTH LOVE YOU, AUNT CYNTHIA.

YES, AUNT CYNTHIA.

BUT THEN CYNTHIA TELLS ME WHAT ROLAND AND ENIG HAD PLANNED.



ONCE WE GET HER TO MAKE OUT A WILL LEAVING ALL OF HER DOUGH TO US.

WE KIDNAP HER OFF!

AND NOW I KNOW WHY THE BODY I EMBRACE WITHIN MY EARTH-WOMAN IS NOT AT PEACE. NOW I KNOW WHY IT SCRATCHES AND STINGS INSIDE. CYNTHIA MEADOWS HAD BEEN MURDERED...



THE BODY WITHIN ME TURNS AND PUSHER AND SCRATCHES I TRY TO STOP IT. TRY TO MAKE MY INSIDES HARD... BUT IT IS DETERMINED. THEN, ONE NIGHT... MONTHS AFTER I HAD FIRST EMBRACED IT... THE BODY PULSED UPWARD INTO THE COOL AIR... PUSHING OUTWARD PAST MY CHEST-BOX.



HER NIECE AND NEPHEW HAD PUSHED HER DOWN A LONG FLIGHT OF CELLAR STAIRS. THEY'D TOLD THE DOCTOR...



WE HEARD HER SCREAM AND FALL! WE CAME AS FAST AS WE COULD! WHEN WE GOT HERE... SHE...

WHAT A HORRIBLE ACCIDENT! SOB...

SHE'S... SHE'S DEAD!

DESPITE MY PLEASING, IT TOTTERS OFF...ACROSS THE OTHER GRAVES...INTO THE COLD WIND...THE WIND THAT CARRIES BACK TO ME ONCE AGAIN THE LAUGHTER AND SCORN OF THE OTHERS...



AND WITHIN ME THERE IS AN EMPTINESS AND A HEARING ONCE MORE. I AM LONELY ONCE MORE.

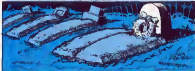
WE WERE THE SAME, CYNTHIA AND I... BARREN AND FRUITLESS AND WAITING. AND THEN THE WAITING ENDED FOR BOTH OF US. ROLAND WAS GIVEN TO HER, AND SHE TO ME. BUT LIKE ROLAND LEFT CYNTHIA TO THE LAUGHTER AND THE SCORN, SHE TOO HAS LEFT ME. NOW, I CAN ONLY DO AS SHE DID. TRY TO FORGET.



IT IS CYNTHIA. SHE HOLDS THEM IN HER VICE-LIKE GRIP AND STAGGERS ACROSS THE OTHER GRAVES... THE OTHER GRAVES THAT HAVE SUDDENLY STOPPED LAUGHING. SHE HOLDS THEM... ROLAND AND ENID... HOLDS THEM OUT TO ME.



CYNTHIA IS SOME AWAY NOW. THE SCREAMING HAS STOPPED. YES, WE WERE ALIVE, SHE AND I. EACH WAITED - EACH GOT WHAT SHE WAITED FOR... ONLY TO LOSE IT AGAIN. BUT WHAT WE LOST WAS EVENTUALLY RETURNED TO US. ROLAND'S AND ENID'S TRUSTED SUFFOCATED BODIES LIE DEEP WITHIN ME, PRESSED AGAINST MY EARTH-BOSOM. AND NOW IT IS I WHO CAN LAUGH... LAUGH AT THE OTHERS.



...FOR NOW I KNOW MY REAL FULFILLMENT. I WOULDN'T LIKE THE OTHERS AFTER ALL, THEY'RE ALL SINGLE GRAVES, I AM A DOUBLE ONE!

THE WIND BLOWS SADLY ACROSS THE GNARLED AND BENT TREES AROUND ME. IT WHISPERS PAST THE COLD STONES I LIE SILENT WITH THE EMPTYNESS WITHIN ME, AND I WAIT. AND THEN, ONE NIGHT, FAR AWAY... I HEAR IT. THE SCREAMING...



SOMETHING IS COMING TOWARD ME, DRAGGING THE SCREAMING BEHIND IT.

...AND I REACH FOR THEM. CYNTHIA HELPS ME REACH. SHE SHOVES ASIDE MY SKIN-CRUST, SODGERS OUT MY INSIDES, PUSHES THEM, SHRIeking, INTO MY EMBRACE...



PER, HEH. AND SO, KIDDIES... OUR LITTLE BELGIAN-WOODENES ON TWO GRAVE NOTE. ROLAND AND ENID WERE PUNISHED FOR THEIR GRIME... BURIED ALIVE. BY CYNTHIA'S CORPSE, AND OUR LITTLE GRAVE ROTTED THEM HAPPILY EVER AFTER. SO NOW... HONK WHERE'S CYNTHIA THESE DAYS, TO ASK? WHY SHE JUST WANDERED AROUND TILL SHE FOUND SOME OTHER



LONESOME GRAVE AND DROPPED IN ON HER FOR AN EXTENDED VISIT 'BYE, NOW!

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

BECAUSE I HAVE RECEIVED SUCH A *FLOOD OF REQUESTS* (ONE THE EDITOR'S MOTHER-IN-LAW!) I HAVE DECIDED TO TELL YOU *ANOTHER INFANTILE INSANITY*. AFTER CAREFUL AND INTERESTING RESEARCH, I HAVE DISCOVERED THE TRUE FACTS BEHIND THE GRIM FAIRY TALE ABOUT THE PRINCESS WHO SLEPT ALL THOSE YEARS. YOU KNOW... THE ONE CALLED...

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY!



ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG, LONG AGO, IN A KINGDOM FAR AWAY... EVEN FURTHER THAN BROOKLYN, MAYBE... THERE STOOD A CASTLE, COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY A HIGH IMPENET... IMPENETRA... IMPENETRA... IT WAS A THICK GROWTH OF BRAMBLES, ALL THORNY AND WHAT-NOT, AND TO THIS CASTLE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY THE IMPENET... IMPENET... THE *STUPID*, CAME A PRINCE...

PARSON, HE, MY GOOD MAN.  
WHAT PLACE IS THIS?

HUH?



I SAID, WHAT PLACE IS *THAT*? WHO REMIRED IN YON PALACE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY THAT IMPENET... IMPENET... THAT *BRAMBLE FOREST*?

SO WHO WANTS TO KNOW?







ISN'T IT *TRUE*, MY GOOD MAN, THAT MANY YEARS AGO, A KING AND QUEEN LIVED IN THAT CASTLE?



AND THE KING AND QUEEN WANTED A CHILD VERY *BADLY*.



AND FINALLY, THE QUEEN PRESENTED THE KING WITH A BOUNCING BABY GIRL.



THE KING WAS SO OVERJOYED WITH HIS NEW PRINCESS, THAT HE ISSUED AN INVITATION...

HERE IS A LIST OF *EVERYBODY* WHO IS ANYBODY. INVITE THEM TO A FEAST... IN HONOR OF MY NEW DAUGHTER.



THE VILDS OF THE KINGDOM FLOCKED TO THE FEAST... FEARED TO THE FLOST...ER. THEY CAME TO EAT...

SOME SPREAD! IT MUST BE JELLY, 'CAUSE JAM DON'T SHAKE LIKE THAT.



BUT THE KING, WHO WAS A FORTGETFUL KING, HAD FORGOTTEN TO INVITE ONE BIG WHEEL.

AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... YOU WILL ALL MAKE A PREDICTION CONCERNING THE HAPPY FUTURE OF MY NEW DAUGHTER!



THIS BIG WHEEL WAS FIT TO BE TIED, REMEMBER... BUT ITS TIGHT TIGHT WHEEL? TIRE ON THE WHEEL? OH, NEVER MIND! ANYWAY, THIS BIG WHEEL ROLLED IN AT THE HEIGHT OF THE FESTIVITIES...

YOU WANT A PREDICTION, KING BRINGS? ALL RIGHT? I'LL GIVE YOU ONE... THE PRINCESS WILL DIE ON HER EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY...



EVERYONE AT THE FEAST WAS SHOCKED AT THE PREDICTION OF THE BIG-SHOT WHO WASN'T INVITED.

DID THE GLOW-DRIFT? ALWAYS! G'MON! RATE SOMEONE! G'MON!



BUT A THOUGHTFUL V.I.P. CALMED THE AGGRIEVED GATHERING BY PUTTING IN HER TWO CENTS...

ON HER EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY, THE PRINCESS WILL NOT DIE, BUT WILL GO TO SLEEP.

AND G'MON, ETHEL, THE PARTY IS GETTING REAL DULL!





THE PRINCE STOOD UP, SQUARE AND STRONG.

THAT'S BECAUSE NONE OF THEM HAS A SOLID GOLD-PLATED BOY SCOUT KNIFE!



THE PRINCE TURNED TO THE BRAMBLES.

IT IS LATE! SOON IT WILL BE DARK! I MUST HURRY! 'BYE!'

'BYE! HAPPY REWIND!'



THE BRAVE PRINCE STRUCK OFF INTO THE THICK GROWTH OF THORNY BRAMBLES.

SEE HOW THE LETHALLY ARMED BRANCHES FALL BEFORE THE KEEN BLADE OF MY TRUSTY SOLID GOLD-PLATED BOY SCOUT KNIFE.



HOW? AFTER HOW? HE HICKED.

WELL, WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? IT'S A HACK STORY!



... TIME AND TIME AGAIN, HE PASSED SPEED-UP, SKEWELED, MUMMIFIED BODIES OF PRINCE CHARMING WHO HAD WAIRLY ATTEMPTED TO REACH THE SLEEPING BEAUTY.

CHORE...



... THE SUN WAS JUST BEGINNING TO SET WHEN CHARMING PRINCE CHARMING REACHED THE CASTLE DOOR.

ONE MORE HACK! AND I'LL BE THROUGH.



EDITOR'S NOTE! ONE MORE HACK! YAWN LIKE THIS AND WE'LL ALL BE THROUGH.

FINALLY, THE PRINCE BRINGS OPEN THE CASTLE DOOR.

SLEEPING BEAUTY? I AM HERE!



BREATHLESSLY, HE RUSHED FROM ROOM TO ROOM.

SLEEPING BEAUTY? WHERE ARE YOU?



AND THEN...

OH! THE SLEEPING BEAUTY... SLEEPING!





# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HELLO, HELLO AND NOW IT'S WIND-UP TIME IN C.R.'S WOOD-WARD, AND YOUR HOSTESS IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR, YOUR STENDER OF SCARY STORIES, YOUR DISHER-OUTER OF DELICIOUS DREAMS, THE OLD WITCH, IS READY WITH HER SLEEPING CAULDRON. SO TUCK YOUR DROOL DIPS UNDER YOUR QUIVERING CHINS AND I'LL BEGIN THE FOOL FARE. I CALL...

## SHADOW OF DEATH

COME WITH ME TO A LONELY CORNER IN THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS SECTION OF A LARGE CITY. OVERHEAD, THE LAST FADING STAR IS FINALLY RETREATING BEFORE THE ADVANCING LIGHT OF DAWN, AND THE SLEEPING CITY IS AWAKENING TO THE SOUNDS OF JANGLING ALARM CLOCKS. BUT LONG BEFORE THE CITY'S OFFICE WORKERS AND BUSY HOUSEWIVES HAVE RISEN FROM THEIR WARM BEDS, EZRA WORTON HAS BEEN ON THE JOB. THERE HE IS NOW, UNLOCKING HIS LITTLE NEWSSTAND AND SWINGING WIDE ITS DOORS. NOTICE HOW EZRA LABORS, WINCING IN PAIN. YES, DEAR READER, EZRA IS AN INVALID. A CRIPPLED NEWSDEALER. EZRA WORTON IS PARALYZED FROM THE WAIST DOWN.



NOTICE THE BUNDLE OF MORNING NEWSPAPERS STACKED ON THE CURB BESIDE EZRA'S NEWSSTAND, READY TO BE UNTIED AND LAID OUT NEATLY ON DISPLAY. SEE HOW EZRA STRUGGLES, BENDING IN HIS WHEELCHAIR AND LIFTING THE HEAVY PACKAGES...



NOW SEE THE DARK AND DESERTED SUBWAY KIOSK NEARBY, INTO WHICH, IN A FEW MINUTES, THE OFFICE-BOSS SECRETARIES AND THE FACTORY-BOSS LADIES WILL BEGIN TO FLOW, ARMED WITH THE NEWSPAPERS THEY HAVE PURCHASED FROM EZRA'S STAND.



YES, DEAR READER: EZRA SMILES. HE SMILES BECAUSE HE IS CONTENT. FOR THIS IS HIS *LIFE*! ALL THAT MATTERS TO HIM: THIS LITTLE NEWSTAND, WITH ITS FEW HUNDRED DAILY PAPER SALES, IS EZRA'S CASTLE. ITS WEAKER PROFIT IS THE LINE DRAWN BETWEEN INDEPENDENCE AND STARVATION FOR HIM. SO EZRA SMILES. BUT EZRA DOES NOT SMILE FOREVER. SUDDENLY EZRA CATCHES SIGHT OF A FIGURE STANDING NEAR THE SUBWAY KIOSK...



AND NOW THE PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO HURRY FROM ALL DIRECTIONS TOWARD THE SUBWAY ENTRANCE. AND THE BIG MAN WITH THE PAPERS UNDER HIS ARMS HURRIES TO MEET THEM ON STROMS LESS THAT ARE NOT WITHERED AND PARALYZED AS EZRA'S ARE...



NOW, EZRA IS READY FOR THEM... FOR THE PARADE OF HUMANITY TO PASS BY HIS STAND AND TOSS ITS COPPER PENNIES UPON HIS PAPERWEIGHTS AND EAT AWAY AT THE STACKS UNTIL ONLY A FEW LAST BITTERED COPIES REMAIN. SEE HOW HE SMILES.



...A MAN CLUTCHING A STACK OF NEWSPAPERS UNDER HIS HUGE ARM.



YES, EZRA DOES NOT SMILE. FEAR GRIPS EZRA'S HELPLESS BODY. THAT MAN... THAT MAN WITH THE PAPERS AND THE HEALTHY LEGS IS STEALING PAPER SALES THAT ORDINARILY WOULD BE EZRA'S.



EZRA BEGINS TO DO WHAT HE HAS NEVER DONE BEFORE. HE CALLS OUT, TRYING TO ATTRACT ATTENTION, CALLING FOR SALES, IMPLORING, REMINDING THE MASS OF HUMANITY WITH HEALTHY LEGS THAT IT HAS ALWAYS BOUGHT ITS PAPERS FROM HIM.



AND NOW, THE MORNING RUSH HOUR IS ALMOST OVER. EZRA'S PAPER STACKS STAND HIGH AND HARDLY TOUCHED. THE MAN WITH THE HEALTHY LEGS WAVES TO EZRA.



THE MAN MOVES OFF. EZRA STARES AT THE UNSOLD PAPERS PILED UPON HIS NEWSSTAND COUNTER.



ALL DAY LONG, EZRA SITS IN HIS WHEELCHAIR TRYING TO SELL HIS PAPERS TO THE FEW WHO STRAGGLE BY HIS STAND.



FINALLY, DARKNESS BEGINS TO FALL. SADLY, EZRA TIES HIS UNSOLD PAPERS INTO BUNDLES AND DEPOSITS THEM ON THE CURB FOR THE TRUCKS TO PICK UP WHEN THEY DELIVER THE NEXT DAY'S EDITIONS.



BUT THE SLEEPY-EYED PEOPLE ARE BLIND. IN THEIR RUSH TO CATCH THEIR TRAINS, THEY DO NOT NOTICE THAT THEY ARE BUYING THEIR MORNING PAPERS FROM SOMEONE NEW.



THE NEXT MORNING THE MAN IS THERE AGAIN, HURRYING ABOUT ON HIS STRONG LEGS SELLING HIS PAPERS TO THE UNWARY PASSAGE, WHILE EZRA CRIES IN SILENCE.





THE DAYS PASS. EVERY MORNING THE MAN IS THERE, STEALING SALES FROM EZRA. AND EVERY NIGHT, EZRA COUNTS HIS UNSOLD PAPERS AND TIES THEM INTO BUNDLES.



I'LL... I'LL NEVER MAKE ENOUGH TO LIVE ON THIS WAY!

BUT WHAT CAN EZRA DO? WHAT CAN A CRIPPLE DO TO A MAN WITH A HEALING STRONG BODY? THE TRUCKMAN LEAVES. EZRA SITS WITH HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS...



IF I WEREN'T PARALYZED... IF I WEREN'T CRIPPLED AND HELPLESS. IF I WERE STRONG, I'D SHOW HIM! I'D... DOH.

ABOVE, THE SKY IS JUST BEGINNING TO GLOW LIGHT. THE GLOW FROM A NEARBY STREETLAMP CASTS EZRA'S SHADOW UP AGAINST HIS NEWSSTAND.



I'D DOH... I'D...

A WEEK GOES BY. TWO. ONE HOPING, A TRUCKMAN WHO DELIVERS EZRA'S PAPERS WARNS HIM.



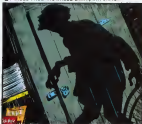
IF YOU CAN'T SELL MORE PAPERS THAN THIS, EZRA, WE'LL CUT YOU OUT OF OUR DELIVERY ROUTE.

I'LL... I'LL TRY. I'LL DO SOMETHING!

SUDDENLY, EZRA'S SHADOW LIFTS ITS HEAD FROM ITS HANDS...



IT RISES FROM ITS WHEEL CHAIR, WAVERING...



IT SLIDES OFF, DOWN THE DESERTED STREET, ON UNSTEADY LEGS...



...IT SLIDES ACROSS BRICK WALLS...



...BOARD FENCES...



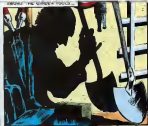
...HESITATES BEFORE A HARDWARE STORE...



IT REACHES IN, PLUCKING THE SHADOW OF THE AXE  
PARKING IN THE WAGON...



...LIFTING AWAY THE SHADOW OF THE SHOVEL, STANDING  
BEHIND THE GARDEN TOOLS...



...BACK ACROSS BOARD FENCES...



...BACK ACROSS BRICK WALLS...



...TO A FAMILIAR CORNER WHERE A  
FAMILIAR SHADOW STANDS WITH THE  
SHADOW OF A HUGE BUNDLE OF  
PAPERS UNDER ITS ARMS...



EDRA'S SHADOW LIFTS THE SHADOW OF THE AXE IT HAS STOLEN...



THE SHADOWS OF THE PAPERS SCATTER ACROSS THE BUILDING WALL AS THE FIGURE CRUMPLES, SPURTING A SHADOW-FOUNTAIN FROM ITS WOUND.



NOW EDRA'S SHADOW DRAGS THE LIFELESS SHADOW DOWN THE ALLEY BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS...



...AND BRINGS IT DOWN UPON THE FAMILIAR SHADOW WITH THE PAPERS UNDER ITS ARMS.



EDRA'S SHADOW PEERS AT IT. THE CRUMPLED SHADOW STIRS. EDRA'S SHADOW LIFTS THE AXE SHADOW ONCE MORE.



...DEPOSITING IT IN AN EMPTY LOT BESIDE A FADING BILLBOARD...



WITH THE SHADOW-SHOVEL, EDRA'S SHADOW Digs A SHALLOW SHADOW-GRAVE BESIDE THE BILLBOARD.



...AND PUSHES THE LIFELESS SHADOW IN...



...AND SHOVELS THE SHADOW-SOIL IN UPON IT.

THEN, EDRA'S SHADOW RETURNS TO THE NEWSSTAND WHERE EDRA STILL SITS WITH HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS...



...AND EDRA'S SHADOW ASSUMES EDRA'S POSITION AS EDRA HEARS...



EDRA ROLLS HIS WHEELCHAIR TO THE CRUMPLED FORM OF THE BIG MAN WITH THE HEALTHY LEGS LYING AMONG HIS SCATTERED PAPERS...



LATER, THE MORGUE-WAGON ATTENDANTS LIFT THE BODY OF THE MAN WHO ALMOST STOLE EDRA'S BUSINESS FROM HIM. AS THEY CARRY IT TO THE WAITING TRUCK, EDRA GASPS...



WHICH IS THE NEAREST TRICK OF THE WEEK, WOULDN'T YOU SAY? WELL, THAT'S MY REVOLVING RECIPE FOR THIS ISSUE, DROOPS. NOW IT'S TIME TO PUT OUT THE FIRE UNDER MY POT AND CLOSE THE DOORS TO THE HANDS OF FEAR, SO TODDLE ALONG. WE SHOULD REMEMBER WILL ALL BE BACK NEXT IN V.R.'S MAN, THE VAULT OF NEWTON. 'BYE, NOW. ER... I SAID 'BYE' SO GO ON 'N SCRAM, ALREADY!



...FOR, ALTHOUGH THE MORNING SUN IS SHINING BRIGHTLY, THE DEAD MAN'S BODY CASTS NO SHADOW.



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# TALES



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FROM THE

# CRYPT

STORIES



THE WOLF



THE WOLF



THE WOLF



DOUBLE-SIZED HORROR!

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NO. 3



NOV

# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELL, HEY! SO YOU'RE BACK FOR MORE GORE, EH, FRIEND? WELL, THIS IS THE SPOT FOR IT! WELCOME TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR! THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HORROR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO START THE BRANK ROLLING IN MY RICKING-RAG WITH ANOTHER SPINE-TINGLING TALE FROM MY CREEP-COLLECTION. TWENTY YOUR BELTS SO YOU WON'T BE SCARED OUT OF YOUR PANTS, AND I'LL BEGIN THE BLOOD-GORDELCH I CALL...

## UNDERTAKING PALLOR



MR. ESPROCK'S BLACK PANEL TRUCK HAD PULLED UP BEFORE HIS MORTUARY, AND SOMEHOW HE'D GOTTEN THE KEYS BACK WITH ITS SPIRIT CONTENTS INSIDE, WHILE OUT IN THE LITTER-STREAM BACK YARD, THE BOX HAD CREPT TO THE BACK WINDOW ON TIPTOES, LIKE US MANY GREY SHADOWS... LIKE SO MANY MICE, THEY'D POCKETED INTO THE PORCELAIN AND GLASS-LINED UNDERTAKING PALLOR WITH WIDE EYES AND CHATTERING TEETH. WHISPERING...

THAT'S OLD MAN  
PROVES  
HE DID  
YESTER-  
DAY!

MR. ESPROCK'S  
WITIN' READY TO  
FUMBLIN' HIM.

I DON'T  
WANT TO  
LOOKIN'  
SCARED!

JESSE!





THERE IS A MORBID CURIOSITY IN CHILDREN, A STRANGE FASCINATION WITH DEATH. IT HURRIES THEM TO THE SCENES OF ACCIDENTS, SUCKS THEM INTO MOVIE THEATERS TO WATCH IT UNFOLD ON SILVER SCREENS, PROMPTS THEM TO MAKE-BELIEVE ABOUT IT... AND DRAWS THEM TO WINDOWS IN UNDERTAKING PARLORS.



WHAT'S HE  
DOIN'?  
SHARRY?

HE'S TAKIN'  
OFF THE  
CLOTHES?

SH-SHARRY?  
HE'LL HEAR  
YOU!

DEATH IS THE UNKNOWN IN THE LIFE EQUATION. IT IS THE ULTIMATE FINAL RESULT OF EVERY LIVING EXAMPLE. IT IS THE UNQUESTIONABLE TO YOUNG MINDS CLASPING FOR ANSWERS...



NOW HE'S  
SHARPENIN'  
HIS SCALPEL?

WOLLY!  
I DON'T  
FEEL SO  
GOOD!

SO IT WAS ONLY NATURAL FOR CHERRY AND PETE AND BILLY AND PERCIVAL TO WANT TO SEE MORE OF THIS UNTHINKABLE PROBLEM. TO WANT TO LEARN WHAT NEXT IN BEHIND MR. ESPROCK'S CLOSED MORTUARY DOORS.



IF IT MAKES  
YOU SICK...  
DON'T  
LOOK,  
PERCY?

USH! HE'S KICKIN'  
OLD MR. ESPROCK!  
DOWN AT THE BASE  
OF HIS NECK...

INSIDE THE MORTUARY, OLIVIOUS TO THE WIDE PYING EYES THAT FOLLOWED HIS EVERY MOVE, AVERILL ESPROCK LABORED SLOWLY, DELIBERATELY, AS IF HE ENJOYED HIS WORK.



WHAT'S THAT HE'S  
DOIN', BILLY?

STICKIN' A NEEDLE WITH  
A FINE INTO THE GUY HE  
MADE IN MR. SPONES' NECK!

AND AS HE WORKED, AVERILL HUMMED SOFTLY, FILLING THE MORTUARY WITH HIS MATED GREEN MUSIC.



HE'S TURNIN' ON SOME  
KIND OF MOTOR?

HE'S PUMPIN'  
OUT THE BLOOD,  
THAT'S WHAT  
HE'S DOIN'!

WHAAAA!

THE PUMP BEGAN TO GURGLE, GURGLES THE SCARLET LIQUID OUT OF THE DEAD BODY THROUGH THE PULSATING TUBE AND SENDS IT INTO THE PORCELAIN SINK.



WOLLY! WE COULD CHANGE  
THE ROBT OF THE BANK  
ADVERTISEMENTS TO WATCH  
THIS!

MR. BRUDDERMAN! YOU'RE  
ALWAYS THINKIN' OF  
WAYS T' MAKE MONEY!  
THIS!

AFTER A WHILE THE GURGLES STOPPED AND THE PUMP RAN QUIETLY.



THE BLOOD'S  
ALL PUMPED  
OUT?

NOW  
WHAT?

HE'S TAKIN' DOWN THAT  
BIG JAR OF LIQUID!

MR. ESPROCK RIPPED THE HOSE THAT RAN OFF INTO THE RED-STAINED PORCELAIN SINK AND PUSHED IT INTO THE NECK OF THE JUV WITH THE COLORLESS LIQUID.



THE LAST DROP OF THE EMERALGINE FLUID GURGLED OUT OF THE JUV AS THE LAST DROP OF A SODA IS SUCKED FROM A FOUNTAIN GLASS THROUGH A PRAYED STRAW. MR. ESPROCK SHUT OFF THE MOTOR.



SOMEWHERE IN THE MORTUARY, A BELL TINKLED. MR. ESPROCK STIFFENED. A FIGURE SNEPT ASIDE THE CURTAINS AND CAME INTO THE BACK ROOM.



AVERILL PRESSED A SWITCH. THE PUMP REVERSED ITSELF. THE GURGling BEGAN AGAIN. THE COLORLESS LIQUID IN THE JUV BEGAN TO SLOWLY DISAPPEAR, FORCED INTO MR. GROVES' EMPTY ARTERIES.



THE KIDS FLEUNG THROUGH THEIR PEET-HOLE WHISPERED EXCITEDLY...



MOP...NOBODY SAW ME. HOW MUCH DO WE MAKE THIS TIME?



FIFTY BUCKS? FOR DRYIN' OUT LOUD, IT DON'T PAY TO TAKE SUCH CHANCES FOR THAT LITTLE DOUN.







AFTER CHUBBY LEFT, PETE TOLD HIS PLAN TO BILLY. THEN THEY WERE ANGRY TO THE FRONT OF MR. ESPROCK'S MORTUARY AND WAITED. THEY WAITED UNTIL MR. ESPROCK CAME OUT.



YOU LOOK FINE, MR. ESPROCK. YOU LOOK *SURE!*

YOU *DOOM!* KNOW! EXCUSE DOWN WITH SOMETHING! MR. ESPROCK!

I DON'T KNOW! EXCUSE DOWN WITH SOMETHING! MR. ESPROCK!



MR. ESPROCK WENT BACK INTO THE MORTUARY THE KIDS DARTED AROUND TO THE BACK WINDOW IN TIME TO HEAR...



OUTSIDE MR. BRUGHT'S STORE, CHUBBY WAITED PATIENTLY. FINALLY, MR. BRUGHT CAME OUT...



HOW'D YOU LIKE TO MAKE A *WINK!* CHUBBY! DELIVER THIS PACKAGE OVER TO MR. ESPROCK AT THE UNDER-*STAYING* PARLOR.



CHUBBY TOOK THE PACKAGE AND RUSHED STRAIGHT TO THE CLUB HOUSE WITH IT. PETE AND BILLY WERE WAITING.



HERE IT IS!

OH, FOR IT OUT...

HERE'S THE *RAY-POISON!*

MR. ESPROCK OPENED THE DOOR TO HIS MORTUARY TO SEE CHUBBY STANDING BEFORE HIM, HOLDING A STRAY CAT IN ONE HAND AND THE BOTTLE OF 'TOMIC' IN THE OTHER.



MR. BRUGHT ASKED ME TO *DELIVER* THIS, MR. ESPROCK!

OH, THANK YOU, CHUBBY!

CHUBBY HELD OUT THE BOTTLE OF 'TOMIC', LETTING IT SLIP FROM HIS FINGERS.



HERE TAME, DOOOPS!

LOOK OUT, FOR *CLIMBY!*

THE BOTTLE SMASHED INTO A THOUSAND GLITTERING FRAGMENTS AND THE 'TOMIC' POOLED OUT OVER THE MORTUARY FLOOR. CHUBBY RELEASED THE STRAY CAT.



GOLLY! I'M SORRY, MR. ESPROCK. I.E. HERE, KITTY!

GET THAT CAT OUT OF HERE!



THE CAT WAS BUSILY LAPPING UP THE SPILLED TONIC. CHUBBY HESITATED...

I SAID GET THAT CAT OUT OF HERE!

LOOK, MR. ESBROOK!



THE CAT NERVOUSLY FILLED WITH THE TONIC-POISON, IT SQUEALED AND ROLLED OVER...

WHAT HAPPENED TO IT?

GOOD LORD... IT'S DEAD!



MR. ESBROOK STUCK HIS FINGER INTO THE POOL OF 'TONIC' AND SWIPPED IT...

WHY THAT DIRTY DOUBLE-CROOK!!! THIS IS POISON!

WELL, I GOT TO GO, MR. ESBROOK!



THE NEXT DAY, PETE'S FATHER'S FUNERAL WAS HELD IN A STEADY DOWNPOUR. THE BOYS WATCHED FROM AFAR...

THINK ESBROOK FELL FOR IT?

WE'LL SEE TOMORROW WHEN HE MEETS GRUBBY!



LATE THAT NIGHT THE KIDS WAITED FOR MR. ESBROOK TO EMERGE FROM HIS MORTUARY. TOWARD MIDNIGHT, HE CAME OUT. THEY FOLLOWED HIM AT A SAFE DISTANCE AS HE MADE HIS WAY SILENTLY OUT OF TOWN...

HE'S HEADED FOR THE CEMETERY!

P-P-POLLY?

C'mon!



PETE AND BILLY AND CHUBBY FOLLOWED MR. ESBROOK INTO THE CEMETERY. MR. GRUBBY WAS WAITING...

THAT JOE ANDRELL?

SURPRISED GRUBBY? YOU THOUGHT I'D BE DEAD BY NOW, DIDN'T YOU?



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT, ANDRELL?

I'M TALKING ABOUT THAT POISONED TONIC YOU SENT ME, MORT. ESBRUCK THE BOY DROPPED IT!

THE KNIFE IN MR. ESPROCK'S HAND GLINTED IN THE MOONLIGHT...

ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL ME, BRUDY? WELL NOW... I'M GONNA KILL YOU!

ARE YOU TRYING TO KILL ME, BRUDY? WELL NOW... I'M GONNA KILL YOU!



MR. ESPROCK DROPPED THE KNIFE DOWN INTO MR. BRUDY'S CHEST. MR. BRUDY'S SCREAM ECHOED THROUGH THE DESERT CEMETERY.

YAAAAAAA



SUDDENLY THE NIGHT WAS VERY STILL, SAVE FOR AVERILL ESPROCK'S HEAVY BREATHING AS HE STOOD OVER MORE GRUDY'S PROFOUNDLY SPRAWLED BODY... AND THEN...

AAAAAGGGGG

WHO'S GONNA THERE?



MR. ESPROCK SPUN AROUND, THE KNIFE GRIPPED TIGHTLY IN HIS HAND.

WHO'S THERE?

G'WON! LET'S RUN FOR IT!



THE BOYS BEGAN TO RUN. MR. ESPROCK SCREAMED AFTER THEM.

COME BACK! G'WON! HERE, YON...

I... BRADY... I CAN'T... BRADY... RUN... BRADY... FASTER.



THEY RAN WILDLY OVER THE GRAVE-MOUNDS... THE THREE TERRIFIED BOYS WITH MISPLACED MR. ESPROCK CLOSING BEHIND THEM, BRANDISHING THE BLOODY KNIFE...

BRADY! BRADY! RUN!

I CAN'T! I'LL KILL YOU! I SWEAR! IF I'LL...



SUDDENLY, MR. ESPROCK PLUNGED FORWARD, SPLATTERING HIS HEAD UPON THE SHARP CORNER OF A NEWLY CUT TOMBSTONE...



AND WHEN THE BOYS CAUTIOUSLY RETURNED TO WHERE HE LAY...

HE'S DEAD?

LOOK! LOOK! AT THE NAME ON THE HEADSTONE!

IT'S FRED'S FATHER'S GRAVE.



HEY, HEY! THERE'S A STRIKING WIND-UP TO A TERROR-TALE, EH, GEEPS? NOW, THE HARRY-KEEPER SMITH WITH HIS TALE OF COFFINS AND CADAVERS, SO I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO HIM. I'LL DO YOU LATER, TALKING 'BOAT BODIES, AS THE FRENCH BEE-BOPPER SAID WHEN HE SAW THE GUILLOTINE... 'MAN, DID THAT CRAZY BARBER CHAIN!'



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH... AND NOW, FOLLOWS, IF YOU WILL VENTURE INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR, YOUR HOST, THE VAULT-KEEPER WILL ENTERTAIN YOU. FOR THIS,

MY OFFERING IN C.F.T.M.A.S., I HAVE CHOSEN A GRAVE TALE. HEH? IT'S TOLD BY A GRAVE! SO, CUDDLE UP TO THAT CORPSE OVER THERE AND I'LL BEGIN THE DRAMA OF DREAD AND DEATH CALLED...

## THE CRAVING GRAVE!



THE WIND BLOWS LADLY AROUND THE MARBLED AND BENT TREES AROUND ME. IT WHISPERS PAST THE GOLD STONE MONUMENTS THAT THE OTHERS PROUDLY HOLD UPWARD TOWARD THE NIGHT SKY. BUT UPON MY BREAST THERE IS NO GOLD STONE FOR THE WIND TO DING OVER. I LIE SILENT WITH AN EARTHNESS WITHIN ME... A YEARNING. THE OTHERS SIGH CONTENTEDLY, SHIFTING AND CRACKING, EMBRACING THEIR CHANGES... THEIR RICH CHILDREN. BUT I AM BARREN... FRUITLESS. BENEATH MY MOUNDED OSTEIN SKIN-CRUST, NO RICH CHANGE LIES, RESTING. I AM LOVELY. I AM GRAYFORD...



I AM AN UNCONQUERED GRAVE, SMILING WITH THE DYING WIND... WAITING FOR MY LINEAGES TO END...  
WAITING FOR A BODY!



I HAVE WAITED LIKE THIS THROUGH THE CENTURIES, WATCHING THE OTHERS AROUND ME, EACH IN THEIR TURN, OPEN WIDE THEIR YEARNING MOUTHS AND TAKE IN THEIR WARDS, CROAKING THEM HAPPILY WITHIN THEIR EARTH-WOMBS...



LOWER THE COFFIN...

SOB...SOB...

I HAVE LAIN FALLOW THROUGH THE FREEZES AND THE THAW, HEALING THEM NURSING THEIR FOSTER-CHILDREN, AND LONGING FOR MY OWN. ON SUNDAYS, I HAVE LISTENED TO THE MOORWARRS AND REMEMBERS COME AND CRY UPON THE OTHERS AND PLACE FLOWERS UPON THEIR ROOSTS...



SOB...SOB...

HE WAS A GOOD MAN...

ON NIGHTS LIKE THIS ONE... WHEN THE SKY IS OVERCAST WITH LOW HANGING RAIN-CLOUDS, WHEN I CAN SEE NO STARS... I CAN ONLY LIE AND LISTEN TO THE HAPPY CHATTERING OF THE BRAVES AROUND ME GUARDING, PROTECTING, CARING FOR THEIR BROOD. I CAN ONLY LIE AND LISTEN AND YEARN. I TEAR FOR THE DAY WHEN I, TOO, WILL REACH FORTH AND DRAW IN MY DEATH-FETTER AND HOLD IT FAST, SUGGING IT WITH MY CAMPANEL...



HERE IT IS, WILLIE.

LET'S GET IT, AL. NOT MUCH TIME LEFT TILL MORNIN'!

AND ALWAYS WHEN THE WIND COMES UP ACROSS THE OTHER WAVES, IT CARRIES THEIR LAUGHTER TO ME. THEY LAUGH BECAUSE THEY HAVE FULFILLED THEIR PURPOSE. THEY LAUGH BECAUSE THEY ARE NO LONGER EMPTY AND BARRER AND CHILDLESS. THEY LAUGH AT ME.



WHY HARD AS A ROCK?

HERE, USE THE PICK...

BUT, WAIT! WHAT IS THAT I HEAR? VOICES IN THE WIND... VOICES IN THE NIGHT... VOICES OVER ME? AND WHAT IS THAT I FEEL? GOLD STEEL BENTING MY CRUST... CRACKING OPEN MY EARTH-SKIN...



WHAT? WHY DON'T PEOPLE DIE IN THE SUMMERTIME... WHEN THE GROUND IS SOFT?

I'LL TELL MY CONGRESS-MAN THEY'LL PASS A LAW!

THERE IS A TREMBLING DOWN DEEP WITHIN ME... A SURGE OF EXCITEMENT AND ANTICIPATION. THE WIND DIES... AND THE LAUGHTER DIES...



NOW OLD WAS DIED

SIXTY-THREE...

ALL THESE YEARS OF WAITING. ALL THESE YEARS OF LONGING AND TEARFUL AND DYING. THEY'RE ALMOST OVER. THOSE MEN UPON MY GUEST... THEY'RE BRAVE OLD MEN...



AND NOW IT IS MORNING. I LIE WITH MY INSIDES TORN FROM ME AND HEAVED UP AT MY SIDE. I LIE OPEN, FEELING THE SUNLIGHT. THE COLD AIR. I HEAR THE GRUNGING STEPS THAT I HAVE HEARD SO OFTEN... HEAR THE GRIEFS OF THE MOURNERS THAT HAVE NEVER UNTIL THIS DAY DELIVERED INTO ME. AND I SMILE...



THE COFFIN IS LOWERED. I REACH UPWARD FOR IT, ACCEPTING IT, FEELING OF ITS SMOOTHNESS, AND SENSING OF ITS CONTENTS... MY DEATH-WARD. MY CORPSE-CHARGE... IN DOWN.



"SOME, ROLAND? IT IS DONE."

"YES... YES... YES, SIR!"

I LISTEN WITH A DRUNKEN JOY TO THE CEREMONY, FEELING THE MOURNERS' FEET UPON MY BREAST. THERE ARE NOT MANY MOURNERS... A NEPHEW, HIS WIFE, AND A LAYED-FRIEND. BUT I DO NOT CARE. IT IS NOT THE MOURNERS WHO I AM INTERESTED IN. IT IS THE ONE FOR WHOM THEY GRIEVE.



"ASKED TO ASKED. DON'T TO BURST..."

THE MOURNERS LEAVE. THE GRAVE DIGGERS STEP FORWARD WITH THEIR SHOVELS. I EMBRACE THE COFFIN MORE AND MORE AS THEY RETURN. MY SOIL-INGRESS TO ME. THEY STAND, FINALLY, UPON MY REPAIRED BODY, TAMING DOWN MY OUTER SOIL, STITCHING UP THE SOUND.



"ALL RIGHT, AMBITIOUS... THAT'S ENOUGH. COME ON."

"TAKE IT EASY, WILLY."

THE GRAVE DIGGERS TRUDGE OFF. I AM FULFILLED. THE EMPTINESS WITHIN ME IS GONE...THE TEARINGS VANISHED. THE BODY LIES UNARMED INSIDE ME. I WHISPER TO IT... SOOTHING IT...COMFORTING IT IN ITS FINAL REST.



THE DAYS AND WEEKS PASS, BUT THE BODY WITHIN MY FOLD DOES NOT LIE AT REST. THE BODY WITHIN ME IS NOT AT PEACE. THERE IS A STIRRING INSIDE THE COFFIN. HERTLING IN MY BODOM. A FLUTTERING... A SCRATCHING...



THE BODY TELLS ME HER STORY. HER NAME IS CYNTHIA WENDOWS. SHE WAS, LIKE ME, LONELY ALL HER LIFE. SHE'D REMAINED UNMARRIED...BARREN, FRUITLESS...YEARNING FOR THE THINGS HER MARRIED SISTER ENJOYED.



"IT'S A LONELY BABY BOY, MYRA. WHAT IS HIS NAME?"

"I'M GOING TO CALL HIM ROLAND."

THE BODY STIRRING WITHIN ME TELLS ME OF THE LONELY YEARS... THE LONGING SHE'D FELT FOR A CHILD OF HER OWN... AND I UNDERSTAND, HADN'T I FELT THE SAME AS SHE?



MAMA SAYS YOU'RE AN OLD MAID, AUNT CYNTHIA. WHAT'S AN OLD MAID?

IT'S... IT'S A WOMAN WHO NEVER MARRIES, ROLAND. A WOMAN WHO HAS NO CHILDREN OF HER OWN.

AND THE EMPTY YEARS HAD CRAWLED BY... AS THEY CRAWLED FOR ME. SHE MADE WISE INVESTMENTS OF THE INHERITANCE SHE'D SHARED WITH HER SISTER, AND SHE'D GROWN WEALTHY. WHILE HER SISTER...



GEORGE'S BUSINESS FAILED, CYNTHIA. HE'S LOST EVERY CENT WE HAD!

I'M SORRY, MYRA. I'LL TRY TO HELP YOU!

MYRA'S FALLEN ILL SUDDENLY. SHE'S DEAD WITHIN THE WEEK...



WHAT...SOB...WHAT ABOUT ROLAND, CYNTHIA? WHAT WILL I DO WITH HIM?

I'LL...I'LL LOOK AFTER HIM, GEORGE... IF YOU WANT ME TO.

AND SO, THE LONELY YEARS HAD ENDED FOR CYNTHIA AS MY LONELY YEARS HAD ENDED. SHE'D TAKEN ROLAND TO HER ROOM AS IT'D TAKEN HER...



BUT I WANT MY MONEY!

YOU MOTHER HAS NONE ANYMORE, ROLAND. SHE'S GONE AWAY FOR A LONG TIME.

SHE'D FELT THE LAUGHTER...THE SCORN AROUND HER AS IT'D FELT SCORN. SHE'D WATCHED THE OTHER WOMEN SHE'D SEEN MARRY AND HAVE CHILDREN. AND SHE'D GRIEVED AS IT'D GRIEVED...



SOB... SOB...

HURRY, EDITH! DINNER'S READY.

YES, MOMMA!

AND SHE'D WAITED THROUGH THE YEARS... AS IT'D WAITED. FINALLY...



WHAT IS IT, GEORGE?

IT'S MYRA, CYNTHIA. SHE'S DESPERATELY ILL. PLEASE...HURRY, QUICKLY!

ROLAND'S ARRIVAL IN CYNTHIA'S HOUSE HAD MEANT THE END OF THE LAUGHTER AROUND HER...THE END OF SCORN...JUST AS HER ARRIVAL HAD MEANT THE END OF SCORN FOR ME...



ROLAND? DINNER'S READY. HURRY.

YES, AUNT CYNTHIA!

HURRY!

CYNTHIA, TOO, HAD BEEN FULFILLED. SHE'D SCOURGED ROLAND—COMFORTED HIM, AND HE'D GROWN INTO MANHOOD. BUT THERE WAS A STINGING WITHIN HIM—JUST AS NOW CYNTHIA STINGED

I'M GOING AWAY, AUNT CYNTHIA. I CAN'T STAY HERE ANY LONGER.

ROLAND? DON'T  
LEAVE ME! PLEASE

THE SCRATCHING, CLANNING BODY WITHIN ME TELLS HER EDYAN HAD LEFT HER. DESPITE HER PLEADING, LEFT HER TO THE LAUGHTER AND THE SCORN AMONG HER PEERS HERE.

AND THEN SHE DISCOVERED HOW  
YOU AND JACK LEFT TO REMARRY.

POOR CYNTHIA, HOW SORRY I  
FEEL FOR HER...TO YEARN FOR  
SOMEONE...TO YEARN FOR IT  
FOR SO LONG...TO FINALLY GET IT  
AND THEN TO LOSE IT ONCE MORE.  
SHE TELLS ME OF HOW BROKEN -  
HEARTED SHE WAS

SHE TELLS ME HOW SHE'S TRIED  
TO FORGET HIM. SHE TELLS ME HOW  
SHE'S INVESTED IN REAL ESTATE  
TO MAKE HER WEALTHIER AND  
WEALTHIER, AND THEN SIX YEARS  
LATER

THE SECRET? I HAD THREE  
HUNDRED DOLLARS IN THE  
DRAWER. IT'S GONE!

THE END OF THE LINE

YES, WHO IS IT?  
WHO... FOR GOD?  
YOU'VE COME  
BACK!

YES, AUNT  
CYNTHIA, AND  
I'VE BROUGHT  
SOMEONE...

CYNTHIA'D BEEN SO GLAD TO SEE ROLAND SHE'D COMPLETELY FORGOTTEN THE CRIME HE'D COMMITTED WHEN HE'D LEFT.

THEY'D COME TO LIVE WITH HER. ROLAND'S BEGGED  
CENTINA'S FOLLOWSHIP.

THIS IS MY HOME. JAZZ, JUST  
SYNTHIA. JAZZ, THIS IS MY  
HOME. SYNTHIA.

ROLAND'S TOLD ME  
AND BRUCE ABOUT  
THEIR FIRST EXPERIENCE

I WAS FROWNED AND FOLDING.  
AUNT CYNTHIA. IT WAS BORROWING  
OF ME TO TAKE THE MONEY?  
I'M SORRY?

THERE, THERE,  
POLAK. IT  
HAPPENED A  
LONG TIME  
AGO.

SO ONCE MORE THE LAUGHTER AND SCORN AROUND CYNTHIA'S DEAD AUNT. ROLAND HAD COME BACK. AND HE'D BROUGHT HIS WIFE. CYNTHIA HAD TWO CHILDREN NOW...



YOU DON'T KNOW HOW HAPPY YOU'VE MADE AN OLD LONELY WOMAN, ENDS... ROLAND?

WE BOTH LOVE YOU, AUNT CYNTHIA!

YES, AUNT CYNTHIA...

BUT THEN CYNTHIA TELLS ME WHAT ROLAND AND ERIC HAD PLANNED...



ONCE WE SET HER TO MAKE OUT A WILL LEAVING ALL OF HER DOUBT TO US...

...WE KNOCK HER OFF!

AND NOW I KNOW WHY THE BODY I EMBRACE WITHIN MY EARTH-WORM IS NOT AT PEACE. NOW I KNOW WHY IT SCRATCHES AND STINGS ME. CYNTHIA MURDERERS HAD BEEN MURDERED...



THE BODY WITHIN ME TURNS AND PUSHES AND SCRATCHES. I TRY TO STOP IT... TRY TO MAKE MY INSIDES HARD... BUT IT IS DETERMINED. THEN, ONE NIGHT... MONTHS AFTER I HAD FIRST EMBRACED IT... THE BODY PUSHES UPWARD INTO THE COOL AIR... PUSHING OUTWARD PAST MY BRISTLY SKIN...



HER MURDERERS HAD PUSHED HER DOWN A LONG FLIGHT OF CELLAR STAIRS. THAT'S TOLD THE DOCTOR...



WE HEARD HER SCREAM AND FALL! WE CAME AS FAST AS WE COULD! WHEN WE GOT HERE... SHE...

WHAT A HORRIBLE, HORRIBLE ACCIDENT! FOR...

SHE'S... SHE'S DEAD!

DESPITE MY PLEASING, IT TOTTLES OFF... ACROSS THE OTHER DIMES... INTO THE COLD WIND... THE WIND THAT CARRIES BACK TO ME ONCE AGAIN THE LAUGHTER AND SCORN OF THE OTHERS...



AND WITHIN ME THERE IS AN EMPYNESS AND A TEARFUL ONCE MORE. I AM LONELY ONCE MORE.

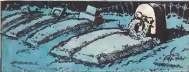
WE WERE THE SAME, CYNTHIA AND I. **HAPPEN AND PROFFLESS AND WAITING**, AND THEN THE WAITING ENDED FOR BOTH OF US. **ROLAND WAS GIVEN TO HER, AND SHE TO ME.** BUT LIKE ROLAND LEFT CYNTHIA TO THE LAUGHTER AND THE SCORN, SHE TOO HAS LEFT ME. NOW, I CAN ONLY DO AS SHE DID, TRY TO FORGET.



IT IS CYNTHIA. SHE HOLDS THEM IN HER VIC-LIKE GRIP AND STAMERS ACROSS THE OTHER GRAVES... THE OTHER GRAVES THAT HAVE SUDDENLY STOPPED LAUGHING. SHE HOLDS THEM...**ROLAND AND ERIC... HOLDS THEM OUT TO ME...**



CYNTHIA IS GONE AWAY NOW. THE SCREAMING HAS STOPPED. YES, WE **WENT** ALINE, SHE AND I. EACH WAITED...EACH GOT WHAT SHE WAITED FOR... ONLY TO LOSE IT AGAIN. BUT WHAT WE LOST WAS EVENTUALLY RETURNED TO US. **ROLAND'S AND ERIC'S TWISTED SUPPUCATED BODIES LIE DEEP WITHIN ME, PRESSED AGAINST MY EARTH-SCORN.** AND NOW IT IS **I** WHO CAN LAUGH...**LAUGH AT THE OTHERS.**



...FOR NOW I KNOW MY **REAL FULFILLMENT**. I **WASN'T LIKE** THE OTHERS **AFTER ALL** THEY'RE ALL **SINGLE GRAVES**. I AM A **DOUBLE ONE!**

THE WIND BLOWS SILENTLY ACROSS THE CHARLED AND BENT TREES AROUND ME. IT WHISPERS PAST THE COLD STONES I LIE SILENT WITH THE EMBODIES WITHIN ME. AND I WAIT. AND THEN, ONE NIGHT, FAR AWAY... I HEAR IT. THE SCREAMING...



SOMETHING IS COMING TOWARD ME, DRAGGING THE SCREAMING BEHIND IT...

...AND I REACH FOR THEM. CYNTHIA HELPS ME REACH. SHE SHOVED ASIDE MY SEEN-CRUST, SCOOPS OUT MY INSIDES, PUSHES THEM DOWNING INTO MY EMBRACE.



HEH, HEH. AND SO, KIDDER... OUR LITTLE **FEEL-FARN** ENDS ON THE **GRAVE NOTE**. **ROLAND AND ERIC WERE PUNISHED FOR THEIR CRIME. BURIED ALIVE...BY CYNTHIA'S SCORPEE**, AND OUR LITTLE **GRAVE NOTED THEM HAPPILY EVER AFTER**. SO NOW...**WHY?** WHERE'S CYNTHIA THERE SAYS, YOU ARE? WHY SHE JUST WANDERED AROUND TILL SHE FOUND SOME **OTHER**



LONDSOME GRAYE AND DROPPED IN ON HER FOR AN EXTENDED VISIT. 'WEE, NOW!'

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S GRIM FAIRY TALE!

BEHIND, I HAVE RECEIVED SUCH A FLOOD OF REQUESTS LONG, THE EDITOR'S MOTHER-IN-LAW. I HAVE DECIDED TO TELL YOU *ANOTHER* INFANTILE INSANITY. AFTER CAREFUL AND INTENSE RESEARCH, I HAVE DISCOVERED THE TRUE FACTS BEHIND THE GRIM FAIRY TALE ABOUT THE PRINCESS WHO SLEPT ALL THOSE YEARS. YOU KNOW... THE ONE CALLED...

## THE SLEEPING BEAUTY!



ONCE UPON A TIME, LONG, LONG AGO, IN A KINGDOM FAR AWAY... EVEN FURTHER THAN BROOKLYN, MAYBE... THERE STOOD A CASTLE, COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY A HIGH IMPENET... IMPENETRA... IMPENETRA... IT WAS A THICK GROWTH OF BRAMBLES, ALL THORNY AND WHAT-HOT... AND TO THIS CASTLE COMPLETELY SURROUNDED BY THE IMPENET... IMPENET... THE STUFF, CAME A PRINCE...

PARSON ME, MY GOOD MAN.  
WHAT PLACE IS THIS?

HUNT!



I SAID, WHAT PLACE IS THIS? WHO  
RESIDES IN YON PALACE COMPLETELY  
SURROUNDED BY THAT IMPENET...  
IMPENET... THAT BRAMBLE  
FOREST?

SO WHO  
WANTS  
TO KNOW?





SO, IT IS I... THE  
HERO OF THIS  
WRECKABLE FICTION...  
CHARMING PRINCE  
CHARMING?

PLEASED  
FAMEET  
YUH!  
I'M  
MELVIN?



MELVIN??



LIKE I SAID, MELVIN...  
MELVIN?... AND  
RESIDES IN YOUR  
CASTLE COMPLETELY  
SURROUNDED BY  
THAT THORNY  
OVERGROWTH?

BEYOND THAT  
IMPERIAL  
THAT IMPACT...  
THAT... BRAMBLE  
ARREST...  
THE SLEEPING  
BEAUTY...  
SLEEPING!



AM? THE SLEEPING  
BEAUTY... FEAR DANGER  
IN DISTRESS... AWAITING  
HER RESCUE... WHEN I  
WILL FOREVER  
CARRY OUT!

DAN IT,  
BUTTER!  
THAT  
BRAMBLE  
BUSH IS  
IMPERIAL...  
IMPACT...  
IT'S THICK!



FEAR NOT, MY GOOD MAN...  
I, CHARMING PRINCE  
CHARMING, WILL RESCUE  
MY VERY THORNY  
THAT GROWTH WITH  
THIS...

BOARDS!  
BALDWIN!  
BRIAN  
AND  
CRICKETS...  
A SOLID GOLD  
PLAYED BOY  
ABOUT KNIFE!



WHEN I OBTAINED  
BY TEARING OFF THE  
TOP FROM A LARGE  
BUSH BRANT AND  
BRINGING IT ALONG  
WITH MY BARE  
AND ADDRESS...

THE DIRTY  
BROODS...  
THEY NEVER  
BENT WE  
BUNE!



TELL ME, MY GOOD MAN...  
WHAT IS THE LEGEND  
OF THE SLEEPING  
BEAUTY?

DID THE  
SQUARE? HE WON'T  
KNOW THE  
LEGEND!



WHY DOES THE  
SLEEPING  
BEAUTY SLEEP?

WHAT A DRECK!  
EVERYBODY  
KNOWS THE STORY  
OF THE SLEEPING  
BEAUTY!



NO?

NO HOW SHOULD I  
KNOW?



ISN'T IT TRUE, MY GOOD MAN, THAT MANY YEARS AGO, A KING AND QUEEN LIVED IN THAT CASTLE?



IT FIGURED!

AND THE KING AND QUEEN WANTED A CHILD... VERY BADLY...



IT FIGURED!

AND FINALLY, THE SUDDEN PRESENTED THE KING WITH A SOUNDING BABY GIRL...



CATCH, KING!

HA HA HA!

NOT SO HARD JOSEPHINE!

THE KING WAS SO OVERJOYED WITH HIS NEW PRINCESS, THAT HE ISSUED AN INVITATION...



HERE IS A LIST OF EVERYBODY WHO IS ANYBODY WANTS THEM TO A FEAST... IN HONOR OF MY NEW DAUGHTER...

YES, YOUR MAJESTY!

THE NERDS OF THE KINGDOM FLOCKED TO THE FEAST...ER...PEASED TO THE FEAST...ER...THEY CAME TO EAT...



SOME SPREAD!

IT MUST BE JELLY, 'CAUSE JAR DON'T SHARE LIFE THAT...

BUT THE KING, WHO WAS A FURNISHED KING, HAD FORGOTTEN TO INVITE ONE BIG WHEEL...



AND NOW, LADIES AND GENTLEMEN... YOU WILL ALL MAKE A PREDICTION CONCERNING THE HAPPY FUTURE OF MY NEW DAUGHTER!

G'MON, ETHEL! THE PARTY'S GETTIN' HOTTIN' BULL!

THIS BIG WHEEL WAS FIT TO BE TIED, HEH, HEH... GET IT? THEY TRIED? WHEEL? THIS ON THE WHEELS ON, NEVER MIND! ANYWAY, THIS BIG WHEEL ROLLED IN AT THE HEART OF THE FEAST...



YOU WANT A PREDICTION, KING IRVING? ALL RIGHT! I'LL GIVE YOU ONE...THE PRINCESS WILL DIE ON HER EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY...

EVERYONE AT THE FEAST WAS SHOCKED AT THE PREDICTION OF THE BIG-SHOT WHO HADN'T INVITED...



DIV THE CREEPY!

ALWAYS CLOWN-ING!

G'MON, SCRAM!

GATE-CHASER!

BUT A THOUGHTFUL KING CALMED THE HORRIFIED GATHERING BY PUTTING IN ANOTHER TWO CENTS...



ON HER EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY, THE PRINCESS WILL NOT DIE, BUT WILL GO TO SLEEP.

WELL, G'MON ETHEL, THIS PARTY IS GETTIN' HEAT BULL!



UNTIL A CHARMING PRINCE WILL AFFECTION HER WITH HIS KISS OF LOVE? WE'LL HUG ME? AND KISS HER... AND KISS HER... AND...

ALL RIGHT, ALREADY!



AND SO IT CAME TO PASS THAT THE BABY PRINCESS GREW UP TO BECOME A LUSCIOUS CHICK THAT ANYBODY WOULD WANT TO HUG AND KISS...

TOMORROW IS YOUR EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY, CHILD! I'M A GROWN WOMAN! LOOK AT ME! LOOK!

LISTEN, DAD! I'M NO CHILD! I'M A GROWN WOMAN! LOOK AT ME! LOOK!



LISTEN, WOMAN! TOMORROW IS YOUR EIGHTEENTH BIRTHDAY. NOW I WANT YOU TO STAY IN YOUR ROOM! NOBODY SLEEP! 'ROUND HERE!

LOOK AT ME! LOOK!



BUT THE NEXT DAY, THE KING AND QUEEN DISCOVERED THEIR DAUGHTER...

DOWN, YOU LADY... IRVING! GET UP!

IRVING? SHE'S DEAD!

NO! WAIT! SHE IS ALIVE! THE PREDICTION HAS COME TRUE!



LOOK, WOMAN! OUTSIDE THE CASTLE!

BRAMBLES HAVE GROWN UP OVER-NIGHT, BEATING AN IMPDET. IMPACTING A FROG WALL OF THORNS...



HOW WILL WE GET OUT? NOW WILL THE DELIVERY MAN GET IMP WE'LL STARVE!

WHAT ABOUT MY BUSINESS?



THE PRINCE STOOD BEFORE HERSELF, CLASPING AND UNCLASPING HIS SOLID GOLD-PLATED BOY BOO UT KIST...

ISN'T THAT THE STORY, MY GOOD MAN?

CORRECT! YOU HAVE NOW THIRTY-TWO DUCATS! WOULD YOU LIKE TO TRY FOR SIXTY-FOUR?



AND ISN'T IT TRUE THAT THE PRINCE CHARMING AFTER ANOTHER HAS TRIED TO NEW HIS WAY THROUGH THE BRAMBLE BURN?

YES, AND THEY ALL WERE CAUGHT AND WERE HORRIBLE BEATING... IMPAIRED UPON THE SHARP THORNS!

THE PRINCE STOOD UP, BODILE AND STRONG...

THAT'S BECAUSE NONE OF THEM HAD A SOLID GOLD-PLATED BOY SODDY KNIFE!



THE PRINCE TURNED TO THE BRAMBLES...

IT IS LATE! SOON IT WILL BE DARK! I MUST HURRY! 'BYE!'



THE BRAVE PRINCE STRUCK OFF INTO THE THICK GROWTH OF THORNY BRAMBLES...

SEE HOW THE LETHALLY ARMED BRANCHES FALL BEFORE THE KEEN BLADE OF MY TRUSTY SOLID GOLD-PLATED BOY SODDY KNIFE...



... HOUR AFTER HOUR, HE HACKED...

WELL, WHAT DO YOU EXPECT? IT'S A **HACK** STORY!



... TIME AND TIME AGAIN, HE PASSED DIED-UP, MARCHED, MUMFIED BONES OF PRINCE CHARMINGS WHO HAD VAINLY ATTEMPTED TO REACH THE SLEEPING BEAUTY...



... THE SUN WAS JUST BEGINNING TO SET WHEN CHARMING PRINCE CHARMING REACHED THE CASTLE DOOR...

ONE MORE **HACK** AND I'LL BE THROUGH...



EDITOR'S NOTE: ONE MORE **HACK** FARM LIKE THIS AND WE'LL ALL BE THROUGH.

FINALLY, THE PRINCE SWUNG OPEN THE CASTLE DOOR...

SLEEPING BEAUTY? I AM HERE!



BREATHLESSLY, HE RUSHED FROM ROOM TO ROOM...

SLEEPING BEAUTY? WHERE ARE YOU?



AND THEN...

HEY! THE SLEEPING BEAUTY... SLEEPING?



1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 26

IT IS I, SLEEPING BEAUTY!  
I HAVE AWAKENED YOU!

ALL THOSE FEARS YOU SOMETIMES  
HAVE SLEPT, UNTIL  
I...

ONLY IN THE JAP-  
TOM NO. 1 SLATS  
- 1000 -

AT NIGHT, I'M WIDE AWAKE!  
I GO OUT INTO THE STREET...  
IMPERIA... THE DEER GO OUT  
THERE AND FIND THE BUCKS  
WHO ARE THERE IN IT...

...AND I WANT THE ORIGINATOR  
FOR YOU SEE...

五、如何设计调查问卷

100

HEH, HEH! WELL, THAT'S MY CHILDREN  
CHILLER FOR THIS MESS, CREEPS.  
HOPE YOU LIKED MY MAGNETIC  
JEWELRY MONIELETTE? AND NOW

WITNESS MY  
SWEETIE. THE OLD  
GAL IS READY  
TO FEED YOU  
FOUL FARE  
AND WIND-UP  
MY REEF-  
FAR. SO I'LL  
BE SHOVELING  
ALONG! READY!  
HOLD FRONT!  
EYES...  
RIGHT

1997, 1998, 1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 26

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEY! AND NOW IT'S WIND-UP TIME IN C.K.'S MAD-MAG, AND YOUR HOSTESS IN THE HAUNT OF FEAR, YOUR STEWER OF SCARY STORIES, YOUR DISH-WAIF OF DELICIOUS DESSERTS, THE OLD WITCH, IS READY WITH HER RECKING CAULDRON! SO TUCK YOUR DRINK CUPS UNDER YOUR GUTTERING CHINS AND I'LL BEGIN THE FOOL FARE & CALL...

## SHADOW OF DEATH

COME WITH ME TO A LONELY CORNER IN THE DOWNTOWN BUSINESS SECTION OF A LARGE CITY. OVERHEAD, THE LAST FADING STAR IS FINALLY RETREATING BEFORE THE ADVANCING LIGHT OF DAWN, AND THE SLEEPING CITY IS AWAKENING TO THE SOUNDS OF JANGLING ALARM CLOCKS. BUT LONG BEFORE THE CITY'S OFFICE WORKERS AND BURY NEWSWYRES HAVE RISEN FROM THEIR WARM BEDS, EZRA MORTON HAS BEEN ON THE JOB. THERE HE IS NOW, UNLOCKING HIS LITTLE NEWSSTAND AND BRINGING WIDE ITS DOORS. NOTICE HOW EZRA LABORS, WINCING IN PAIN. YES, DEAR READER, EZRA IS AN INVALID... A CRIPPLED NEWSDEALER. EZRA MORTON IS PARALYZED FROM THE WAIST DOWN...



NOTICE THE BUNDLE OF MORNING NEWSPAPERS STACKED ON THE COUNTER BESIDE EZRA'S NEWSSTAND, READY TO BE UNLOADED AND LAID OUT NEATLY ON DISPLAY. SEE HOW EZRA STRUGGLES, BENDING IN HIS WHEELCHAIR AND LIFTING THE HEAVY PACKAGES...



NOW SEE THE DARK AND DESERTED SUBWAY KIOSK NEARBY, INTO WHICH, IN A FEW MINUTES, THE OFFICE-BOUNDED SECRETARIES AND THE FACTORY-BOUNDED LABORERS WILL BEGIN TO POUR, ARMED WITH THE NEWSPAPERS THEY HAVE PURCHASED FROM EZRA'S STAND...



YES, DEAR READER, EZRA SMILES. HE SMILES BECAUSE HE IS CONTENT. FOR THIS IS HIS *LIFE*... ALL THAT MATTERS TO HIM, THIS LITTLE NEWSSTAND, WITH ITS FIVE HUNDRED DAILY PAPER SALES, IS EZRA'S CASTLE. ITS MEAGER PROFIT IS THE LINE DRAWN BETWEEN INDEPENDENCE AND STARVATION FOR HIM. SO EZRA SMILES. BUT EZRA DOES NOT SMILE FOR *LONG*. SUDDENLY EZRA CATCHES SIGHT OF A FIGURE STANDING NEAR THE SUBWAY KIOSK...



AND NOW THE PEOPLE ARE BEGINNING TO GURRY FROM ALL DIRECTIONS TOWARD THE SUBWAY ENTRANCE. BUT THE TWO THOUSAND FIVE HUNDRED WHOSE NECKS HAVE BURNED TO HEET THICK OR THIN, LESS THAT ARE NOT WITHERED AND PARALYZED AS EZRA'S ARE...



NOW, EZRA IS READY FOR THEM! FOR THE PARADE OF HUMILITY TO RUSH BY HIS STAND AND TOSS ITS COPPER PENNIES UPON HIS PAPERWEIGHTS AND SET ABOUT AT THE STACKS UNTIL ONLY A FEW LAST BATTERED COINER REMAIN. SEE NOW HE SMILES.



...A MAN CLUTCHING A STACK OF NEWSPAPERS UNDER HIS RUDE ARM...



YES, EZRA DOES NOT SMILE. FEAR GRIPS EZRA'S HELPLESS BODY. THAT MAN...THAT MAN WITH THE PAPERS AND THE VIOLENT CRIES OF THOUSANDS OF PAPER-BUYERS THAT ORDINARILY WOULD BE EZRA'S...



EDNA BEGINS TO DO WHAT HE HAS NEVER DONE BEFORE. HE DALLS OUT, TRYING TO ATTRACT ATTENTION, CALLING FOR SALES, IMPLORING, REMINDING THE MASS OF HUMANITY WITH HEALTHY LENS THAT IT HAS ALREADY BOUGHT ITS PAPERS FROM HIM...



PAPER? MORNING PAPER? GET THEM HERE...

MORNING PAPER, NA'AM? THANK YOU, NA'AM?

AND NOW, THE MORNING RUSH HOUR IS ALMOST OVER. EDNA'S PAPER STANDS STRONG AND ROBUSTLY TOUGHED. THE MAN WITH THE HEALTHY LENS WAVED TO EDNA...

ALL SOLD OUT, SIMPLY? I'LL BE SEE YOU TOMORROW!

THE MAN MOVED OFF. EDNA STARED AT THE UNSOLD PAPERS PILED UP IN HIS NEIGHBOURHOOD QUARTER...



OH... I'LL... I'LL NEVER BE ABLE TO SELL THESE NOW...

BUT THE SLEEPY-EYED PEOPLE ARE BLIND. IN THEIR RUSH TO CATCH THEIR TRAINS, THEY DO NOT NOTICE THAT THEY ARE BUYING THEIR MORNING PAPERS FROM SOMEONE NEW...



PLEASE? I'VE HAD THE CORNER FOR EIGHT YEARS! THERE ARE MY CUSTOMERS! YOU'RE STEALING! PLEASE! FINE YOUR OWN CORNER!

DO WE SOMETHING, SIMPLY? I'LL BE SEE YOU TOMORROW!

ALL DAY LONG, EDNA SITS IN HIS WHEELCHAIR TRYING TO SELL HIS PAPERS TO THE FLOWING CROWD OF HIS STAND...



PAPER? GET YOUR PAPER...

FINALLY, DARKNESS BEGINS TO FALL. EARLY, EDNA TIED HIS UNSOLD PAPERS INTO BUNDLES AND DEPOSITS THEM ON THE CURB FOR THE TRUCKS TO PICK UP WHEN THEY DELIVER THE NEXT DAY'S EDITIONS...



NO... NO...

THE NEXT MORNING THE MAN IS THERE AGAIN, SHOUTING ABOUT ON HIS STRONG LEGS SELLING HIS PAPERS TO THE UNWARY PARADE, WHILE EDNA SITS IN VAIN...



GET YOUR PAPERS HERE!

MORNING PAPER, LADY? THANK YOU...

THE DAYS PASS. EVERY MORNING THE MAN IS THERE, STEALING SALES FROM EZRA. AND EVERY NIGHT, EZRA COUNTS HIS UNOLD PAPERS AND TIES THEM INTO BUNDLES...



I'LL...I'LL NEVER HAVE ENOUGH TO LIVE ON THIS WAY!

BUT WHAT CAN EZRA DO? WHAT CAN A CRIPPLE DO TO A MAN WITH A HEALTHY STRONG BODY? THE TRUCKMAN LEAVES... EZRA SITS WITH HIS IDEAL, UNBROKEN THOUGHTS...



IF...IF I WEREN'T PARALYZED... IF I WEREN'T CRIPPLED AND HELPLESS... IF I WERE STRONG, I'D SHOW HIM! I'D...SOS...

ABOVE, THE SKY IS JUST BEGINNING TO GROW LIGHT. THE GLOW FROM A NEAREST STREETLAMP CASTS EZRA'S THOUGHTS ON HIS CLASPED AND SHAKING HANDS...



I'D...SOS... SOS...I'D...

A WEEK GOES BY. TWO, ONE MORNING, A TRUCKMAN WHO DELIVERS EZRA'S PAPERS WARMS HIM.



IF YOU CAN'T SELL MORE PAPERS THAN THIS, EZRA, WE'LL PUT YOU OUT OF OUR DELIVERY ROUTE.

I'LL...I'LL TRY. I'LL DO SOMETHING!

SUDDENLY, EZRA'S SHADOW LIFTS ITS HEAD FROM ITS HUNGE.



IT RISES FROM ITS WHEEL CHAIR, BARKING...



IT GLIDES OFF, DOWN THE DESERTED STREET, ON UNSTEADY LEGS...





IT SLIDES ACROSS BRICK WALLS...



BOARDS FENCE...



...HESITATES BEFORE A HANGING SPOON...



IT REACHES IN, FLICKING THE SHADOW OF THE AXE HANGING IN THE WINDOW...



...LIFTING AWAY THE SHADOW OF THE SHOVEL, STANDING AMONG THE GARDEN TOOLS...



...BACK ACROSS BOARD FENCES...



...BACK ACROSS BRICK WALLS...



...TO A FAMILIAR CORNER WHERE A FAMILIAR SHADOW STANDS WITH THE SHADOW OF A HUGE BUNDLE OF PAPERS UNDER ITS ARM...



EDRA'S SHADOW LIFTS THE SHADOW OF THE AXE IT  
HAD STOLEN...



THE SHADOWS OF THE PAPERS SCATTER ACROSS THE  
BUILDING WALL AS THE FIGURE CRUMPLES, SPURTING  
A THICK-FOUNTAIN FROM ITS WOUND...



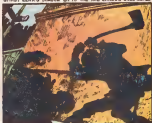
NOW EDRA'S SHADOW DRAGS THE LIFELESS SHADOW  
DOWN THE ALLEY BETWEEN THE BUILDINGS...



... AND BRINGS IT DOWN UPON THE FAMILIAR SHADOW  
WITH THE PAPER UNDER ITS ARM...



EDRA'S SHADOW PEEKS AT IT, THE CRUMPLED SHADOW  
STIRS. EDRA'S SHADOW LIFTS THE AXE SHADOW ONCE MORE.



...DEPOSITING IT IN AN EMPTY LOT BESIDE A FADED BILL-  
BOARD...



WITH THE SHADOW-SHOVEL, EDRA'S SHADOW DOES A  
SHALLOW SHADOW-BRIBE BESIDE THE BILLBOARD...



...AND PUSHES THE LIFELESS SHADOW IN...



...AND SHOVELS THE SHADOW-SOIL IN UPON IT...

THEN, EDRA'S SHADOW RETURNS TO  
THE NEWSSTAND WHERE EDRA STILL  
SITS WITH HIS HEAD IN HIS HANDS...



SOB... SOB... THAT'S...  
SOB... THAT'S WHAT  
I'D DO!

...AND EDRA'S SHADOW ASSUMES  
EDRA'S POSITION AS EDRA HEARS...



HEY? THIS  
GUY'S DEAD?

WOOF?

EDRA ROLLS HIS WHEELCHAIR TO THE  
CRUMPLED FORM OF THE BIG MAN WITH  
THE HEALTHY LEGS LYING AMONG HIS  
SCATTERED PAPERS...



WHAT  
HAPPENED?

HEART ATTACK...  
LOOKS LIKE!

LATER, THE MORNING-WASH ATTENDANTS LIFT THE BODY OF THE MAN WHO  
ALMOST STOLE EDRA'S BUSINESS FROM HIM. AS THEY CARRY IT TO THE WAIT-  
ING TRUCK, EDRA GEEPS...



GOOD LORD?

WHICH IS THE *HEAVIEST* THING OF  
THE WEEK, WOULDN'T YOU SAY? WELL,  
THAT'S MY REVELING RECIPE  
FOR THIS ISSUE, CREEPS. NOW IT'S  
TIME TO PUT OUT THE FIRE UNDER MY  
HOT AND CLOSE THE DOORS TO THE  
MOUNT OF FEAR, SO  
TODDLE ALONG. WE  
GADGET-MAKERS WILL  
ALL BE BACK NEXT  
IN 'K.K.'S MAG, THE  
VAULT OF HORROR.  
'BYE, NOW. ER...  
I SAID 'BYE'!  
GO ON 'N  
SCRAM,  
ALREADY!



...FOR, ALTHOUGH THE MORNING SUN IS SHINING BRIGHTLY, THE DEAD MAN'S  
BODY CASTS NO SHADOW...

**TERROR**



NO. 40  
MARCH



# TALES

## FROM THE

# CRYPT



10¢

®

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



HECKER  
DRAWS



GADZOOKS!  
MY JOY KNOWS  
NO BOUNDS! I  
HAVE JUST RECEIVED  
MY **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB**  
**MEMBERSHIP KIT** WHICH INCLUDES  
A FULL COLOR  
7½X10½ ILLUMINATED  
**CERTIFICATE**, A STURDY  
WALLET **IDENTIFICATION**  
**CARD**, AN ATTRACTIVE  
EMBROIDERED  
**SHOULDER PATCH**,  
AND A STUNNING  
ANTIQUE BRONZE-  
FINISH BAS-  
RELIEF **PIN**. SO  
**WHAT!**

## SO WHAT? SO YOU, TOO, CAN JOIN THE **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!**

FOR AN **INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP**, FILL OUT THE  
COUPON AND SEND IT IN, TOGETHER WITH 25¢.  
IF **FIVE OR MORE** OF YOU WISH TO JOIN AS  
AN **AUTHORIZED CHAPTER**, ENCLOSE **EACH**  
**MEMBER'S NAME AND ADDRESS**, ALONG WITH  
25¢ FOR EACH NAME, AND INDICATE THE NAME  
OF THE **ELECTED CHAPTER PRESIDENT**. WE  
WILL NOTIFY EACH PRESIDENT OF HIS **CHAPTER**  
**NUMBER**. **EVERY MEMBER, CHAPTER OR**  
**INDIVIDUAL**, WILL RECEIVE HIS KIT **DIRECTLY...**  
BY RETURN MAIL.

THE **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB**  
ROOM 706  
225 LAFAVETTE STREET  
NEW YORK 12, N.Y.

SO, ALL RIGHT! SO HERE'S MY TWO  
BITS. SO MAKE ME A MEMBER, ALREADY,  
AND SEND ME THE THINGS AND STUFF LIKE  
WHAT THE KID UP THERE GOT... SO!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_ ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

WELL, NIGHT I SEE YOU'RE HUNGRY FOR HORROR AGAIN. WELL, REST ASSURED... YOUR APPETITE WILL BE SATISFIED. IN FACT, WHEN YOU'RE FAMILIAR WITH THIS PUTRID PERIODICAL, YOU WILL HAVE LOST YOUR APPETITE ENTIRELY. SO DON'T JUST STAND THERE GROOGLING. COME IN! WELCOME ONCE MORE TO THE CRYPT OF TERROR. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, YOUR NAUSEATING NARRATOR, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO CRAWL YOUR SPINE AND CIRCLE YOUR BLOOD WITH THE SPINE-TINGLING TALE OF TERROR I CALL...

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT



THE EVENING PERFORMANCE IS OVER AND THE CIRCUS GROUNDS ARE SILENT SAVE FOR THE FLAPPING OF CANVASES AND THE OCCASIONAL SCREECH OF A GAZED ANIMAL. OVERHEAD, A COLD MOON ILLUMINATES THE MIDNIGHT LANDSCAPE. SUDDENLY, A SHADY FIGURE EMERGES FROM ONE OF THE DARKENED TENTS AND GLIDES QUIETLY ACROSS THE MOWAY. WHISPERING...

STICH

HERE, MARTA...



THE WOMAN PEERS INTO THE SHADOWS, STRAINING TO SEE, HER HEART RACING. THE MAN STEPS INTO THE DIM COLD LIGHT, HIS ARMS EXTENDED.



OH, ERIC, DARLING

MY DEAREST...

THEY EMBRACE... NEARLY... PASSIONATELY. HUNGRY LIPS... HOLDING CLOSE...



WHAT ABOUT CARL?

HE IS ASLEEP. HE DREAMS OF PARIS AND THE WOMAN HE HAS KNOWN...

THE MAN LOOKS INTO THE WOMAN'S EYES, GRAY-GREEN IN THE MOONLIGHT.



BUT... YOU SAID YOU CAN ONLY READ THE THOUGHTS IN HIS MIND HE WANTS YOU TO READ!

HE FADING? NO, ERIC, HE HAS ALWAYS TALKED ME WITH THE POWER HE HAS OVER ME!

THE MAN SHAKES HIS HEAD SADLY, STROKING THE WOMAN'S SOFT FLOWING HAIR...



WHY DID YOU EVER MARRY HIM, MARTA?

IT WAS A MISTAKE, ERIC. I MISTOOK THIS FEAR OF NATURE... THIS ONCE IN A LIFETIME OCCURRENCE... THIS ABILITY OF CARL'S TO PROJECT THOUGHTS AND MINE TO READ THEM... FOR LOVE!

WE DISCOVERED THIS ABILITY QUITE BY ACCIDENT MANY YEARS AGO. CARL IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED ITS GREAT VALUE. BEFORE I KNEW IT, WE'D TEAMED UP AS A MIND-READING ACT, JOINED THIS TRAVELING CIRCUS, AND WERE MARRIED...



AND YOU'VE BEEN UNHAPPY EVER SINCE...

MISERABLE! I KNOW NOW THAT CARL NEVER LOVED ME. I WAS HIS SUBJECT... HIS THOUGHT-PROJECTION RECEIVER... A MERE OF APPARATUS... NOTHING MORE. BUT NOW I KNOW WHAT REAL LOVE IS... NOW THAT I'VE MET YOU.



HE WOULD NEVER LET YOU GO, WOULD HE?

NEVER! IF I DO, HIS ACT WOULD BE OVER. HE'D NEVER GIVE ME A DIVORCE. THERE'S NO USE MY ASKING!



THEN WE WILL, FOR ARA... JOIN ANOTHER CIRCUS. I HAVE HAD MANY OFFERS. AN ANIMAL TRAINER IS IN GREAT DEMAND.

THE WIND RIPS ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS... WHISPERS AROUND THE TENT ROPES, SASSY AGAINST THE CANVAS... CARRYING THE SIGNS, THE WHISPERS, THE SASS OF THE LOVERS IN THE SHADOWS, AND IN HIS TENT, CARL STIRS UNEASILY... OPENS HIS EYES...

MARTA...  
MARTA? MARTA?

HER BED? IT IS EMPTY!  
WHERE COULD SHE BE?



CARL SLIPS ON A ROBE AND COMES OUT OF HIS TENT... OUT INTO THE WHISPERS, SIGHING, GASPING WIND.

VOICES? COMING FROM  
BEYOND THE NEW ANIMAL  
TRAINER'S TENT...

HIS VOICE... AND  
MARTA'S?



CARL MOVES THROUGH THE MOON-  
LIT NIGHT, HIS EYES BURNING LIKE  
HOT COALS... LISTENING...

...AND AT THE END OF  
THE MONTH WHEN I GET  
MY CHECK, WE WILL  
LEAVE... FOR AND  
I... TOGETHER...

OH,  
YES...  
YES...



...LISTENING TO THE LASERNESS IN  
HIS WIFE'S VOICE, THE PASSION, THE  
RUMBLE...

BUT LET'S NOT  
TALK ANYMORE,  
ERIC, DARLING.  
HOLD ME... CLOSE...

SWEET  
MARTA...



...AND THEN, SLOWLY, HE RETURNS  
TO HIS TENT ONCE MORE. HE HAS  
HEARD ENOUGH...

SHE... SHE HAS FALLEN  
IN LOVE WITH HIM. SHE  
IS LEAVING ME. SHE...  
I... I MUST STOP HER!

BUT,  
NOW...



THE MOONLIGHT STREAMS THROUGH THE OPEN TENT-  
FLAP... FALLING ACROSS THE PRINT... BLACK LETTERS ON  
COLD WHITE... THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER...

WHAT'S THIS? "BODIES DISIN-  
TERRED AT LOCAL GRAVE YARD...  
TORN TO PIECES AS IF ATTACKED  
BY WILD BEAST!"



OF COURSE? "TORN TO PIECES BY WILDBEAST"  
THAT'S HOW I CAN STOP HER FROM LEAVING.  
THAT'S IT!





LATER, WHEN MARTA RETURNS FROM HER RENDEZVOUS, AND CRABLES BACK INTO BED, CARL PRETENDS HE IS ASLEEP.



ONLY AFTER MARTA HAS SLIPPED OFF INTO DEEP SLUMBER, DOES CARL STIR... AND RISE... AND SO OUT OF THE TENT.



... AND CROSSES DIRECTLY TO THE NEW ANIMAL TRAINER'S TENT WITH GUN IN HAND.



WHO? WHO'S THERE? WHO.

SET UP! AND DON'T MAKE A SOUND!

ERIC STUMBLER TO HIS FEET...

WHAT'S THE MEANING OF THIS, CARL? PUT DOWN THAT GUN.

SO YOU WERE GOING TO RUN OFF WITH MY WIFE, OH, ERIC? WELL, WELL, SEE ABOUT THAT! MOVE!



CARL MOTIONS ERIC OUT OF THE TENT AND DOWN THE LONG SILENT MIDWAY TOWARD THE BIG TOP.

WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, CARL?

I, ERIC, I'M NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING! YOUR LION WILL DO THE WORK!



THEY CROSS THE TANNARK FLOOR OF THE BIG TOP UNTIL THEY COME TO THE LION CAGE. THE TANNY BEAST PAGES BACK AND FORTH HUNGERLY.



MY LION??

YES, ERIC, I'M GOING TO PUT YOU IN THE CAGE WITH HIM... WITHOUT YOUR WHOP! WITHOUT ANYTHING... JUST FOOD AND YOUR LION!

WITHOUT MY WHOP? I'D BE HELPLESS, PARALYZED... UNABLE TO DEFEND MYSELF! FOR GOD'S SAKE, CARL! HAVE PITY!

PITY IS AN EMOTION BELONGING TO THE PITIFUL ERIC. SET IN.



CARL SWINGS OPEN THE BARRIED DOOR AND PUSHES ERIC SCREAMING AND GOES SPRAWLING. THE LION SNARLS...



...AND THEN, THE CIRCUS SPONGES ECHO WITH THE BLOOD-CURLING SHRIEKS OF A MAN BEING TORN TO SHREDS BY THE RAZOR SHARP FANGS OF A BLOOD-THIRSTY BEAST...



ERIC'S ANGUISHED SHRIEKS ANKERS MARTA AND SHE LOOKS AROUND HILY.

CARL! WHAT WAS THAT? CARL! CA.



CARL'S BED IS EMPTY! OUTSIDE THE TENT, FOOTSTEPS POUND UP THE HIGHWAY TOWARD THE BIG-ICE MARTA SLIPS ON A ROSE AND BURSTS FROM THE TENT...

WHAT IS IT? WHAT'S GOING ON? DON'T KNOW! IT'S COMING FROM THE BIG-TOP!



SHE RUNS WITH THE REST OF THEM... UNTIL THEY COME TO THE LION TRAINER'S CAGE.

GOOD LORD!

ERIC! ERIC!



SHE SCREAMS HIS NAME TWICE, AND THEN SHE JUST STANDS THERE, WATCHING THE BEAST LICK AT THE BLAMED AND MURDERED BODY UNTIL SHE HAS TO TURN AWAY AS THE MASSER SWEEPS OVER HER...

HOW DID IT HAPPEN?

THE CRAZY FOOL! HE MUST HAVE COME OUT HERE TO PRACTICE HIS ACT!

AT THIS TIME OF NIGHT?

CRACK!



AND THEN, SICK, SHE RETURNS TO HER TENT AND SITS AND WAITS, CRYING, UNTIL CARL COMES IN WITH THAT EVIL GRIN ON HIS COLD IMPASSIVE FACE...

YOU DID IT, DIDN'T YOU? YOU KILLED HIM! YOU KNEW!

DIDN'T YOU HEAR WHAT THEY SAID, MARTA? THEY SAID HE MUST HAVE BEEN PRACTICING HIS ACT!



BUT THERE IS NO SOFT IN MARTA'S MIND AS TO HOW ERIC DIED. CARL'S BED WAS EMPTY WHEN ERIC'S CORPSE ARRIVED HER. THE SHEETS WERE GOLD.

"I HATE YOU!" "YOU WILL GET OVER IT, MARTA!"



THE NEXT DAY'S PERFORMANCE IS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE TRAGEDY. THE TENTS ARE LOWERED. THE CIRCUS PREPARES TO MOVE ON.

"LOOK OUT! CARL!"



IT HAPPENS SUDDENLY... WITHOUT WARNING. CARL IS HELPING WITH THE DISMANTLING OF THE BIG-TOP WHEN THE MAIN SUPPORT TOPPLES...

"GOOD LORD!"



THE HEAVY POLE CRASHES DOWNWARD UPON CARL, CRUSHING HIM BENEATH ITS MASSIVE WEIGHT.



AND WHEN THE HUGE SUPPORT IS LIFTED, CARL LIES DEADLY STILL. HIS GLAZED EYES STARE...

"HEL... HE'S DEAD?" "TWO IN A ROW! THE CIRCUS IS JinxED!" "SOMEBODY GET HIS WIFE!"



MARTA IS SUMMONED. SHE STANDS IMPASSIVELY OVER HER HUSBAND'S BODY, SHEDDING NO TEARS, SHOWING NO SIGN OF EMOTION...

"IT... IT WAS AN ACCIDENT, MARTA! THE MAIN SUPPORT..." "HE... HE WILL HAVE TO BE BURIED BEFORE WE CAN GO ON!"



MARTA'S VOICE IS COLD... CALLOUS, AS SHE SAYS...

"SOMEBODY SEND FOR AN UNDERTAKER..."



MARTA LOOKS DOWN AT THE STILL FORM OF HER HUSBAND LYING ON THE TARBARE FLOOR. AND EVEN THOUGH SHE READS HIS THOUGHTS, SHE SHOWS NO SIGNS OF RECOGNITION...

MARTA! MARTA, I AM ALIVE! I'M NOT DEAD! MARTA! LISTEN TO ME! PLEASE! TRY TO HEAR WHAT I AM THINKING! I'M PARALYZED, MARTA! I'M NOT DEAD! I'M PARALYZED! I CAN SEE! I CAN HEAR! I CAN'T MOVE!



AS THE UNDERTAKER AND HIS ASSISTANT LIFT POOR CARL INTO THE WICKER, MARTA MOVES FORWARD...

MARTA! PLEASE! SAVE ME! I'M ALIVE! MARTA! I'M ALIVE! PARALYZED! NOT DEAD! PARALYZED! MARTA! PLEASE...



OH, MARTA! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

YES, MAMA!



PLEASE DON'T EMBALM HIM, BURY HIM AS HE IS. HE WOULD HAVE WANTED IT THAT WAY!

ANYTHING YOU SAY, MAMA!

MARTA! MARTA, NOT!



MARTA LOOKS DOWN INTO PARALYZED EYES THAT CAN STILL SEE... WHISPERS INTO PARALYZED EARS THAT CAN STILL HEAR...

MARTA! OH, GOOD! MARTA...



AT THE FUNERAL, MARTA STANDS, HER FACE A GRANITE MASK, BEHIND THE YAWNING PIT BELOW CARL'S COFFIN...

YOU CAN STOP THIS, MARTA! THERE'S STILL TIME. I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME. I KNOW IT! PLEASE! I BEG OF YOU! DON'T LET THEM BURY ME ALIVE!

LOWER THE COFFIN!



AND EVEN THOUGH THE SOIL IS SHOVELED DOWN UPON THE COFFIN, CARL'S FRANTIC THOUGHT NEVER STILL COME THROUGH TO HER... TO HER AND ONLY HER... TO MARTA, WHO TURNS AND WALKS AWAY DOWN THE PATH LEADING OUT OF THE CEMETERY...

MARTA! DON'T DO THIS! PLEASE! SAVE ME! PLEASE! OH, LORD... MAKE HER SAVE ME!



THE AFTERNOON WINDS? THE NIGHT BREEDS COMES UP, WHISPERING OVER THE GRAVE MOUNDS. SIX FEET BELOW, IN HIS COFFIN, CARL GONCOTRATES AS THE PRECIOUS OXYGEN SLOWLY DISAPPEARS.

MARTA? COME BACK! COME SAVE ME!  
I'LL DO ANYTHING! ANYTHING! HAVE  
PITY ON ME! HAVE PITY!



THE STARS COME OUT, WHITE PIN-POINTS IN A VELVET SHROUD. A FIGURE MOVES OVER THE GRAVE MOUNDS.

I KNOW YOU ARE RECEIVING  
MY THOUGHTS, MARTA! I KNOW.



A SHOVEL DIPS INTO THE SOFT EARTH.

MARTA?  
MARTA,  
YOU DID  
COME! YOU  
DID!



THE DIGGING CONTINUES, THE SHOVEL SCOOPING AWAY THE SOFT EARTH. FINALLY THE LID OF THE COFFIN SWINGS BACK.

MARTA! DARLING! I...  
OH, LORD... YOU'RE  
NOT MARTA!



AND THEN AS CARL LIES HELPLESS... PARALYZED... LIKE A LION-TAMER WITHOUT A WHIP... FEELING THE MAJOR SHARP TEETH RIPPING AND TEARING AT HIS FLESH... UNABLE TO SCREAM AT THE EXCRUCATING PAIN, HE THINKS OF THE NEWSPAPER LYING IN THE MOONLIGHT... THE NEWSPAPER THAT FIRST GAVE HIM THE IDEA OF HOW TO KILL ERIC.

'BODIES DISINTERRED AT LOCAL GRAVE YARD...  
FOUN TO PIECES AS IF ATTACKED BY SOME  
WILD BEAST!' OH, LORD! THEY WERE WRONG!  
THIS IS NO BEAST! IT'S A GHOUL!



HEY, HEY! YEP, KIDDIES! CARL  
ENDED UP JUST LIKE ERIC...  
BEING TORN TO BITS AND  
UNABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF.  
AS FOR MARTA... SHE READ CARL'S  
FINAL THOUGHTS, AND GOT  
QUITE A MENIAL PICTURE  
OF WHAT WAS GOING ON! JUST  
ONE MORE THOUGHT ON THIS  
WHOLE SUBJECT AS THE BOP

CEMETERY FORT-  
MAN KEEPS TELLING  
HIS MOON CREW,  
'ONE THAT CAN GET  
GRAVES'  
WELL, YIK  
AKKITS, SO...  
'WYE, NOW!



# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WELCOME! SALUTATIONS, SLIME SAVOYERS!! NOW IT'S TIME FOR A JAUNT INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN NOWHES, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO ENTERTAIN YOU IN C.K.'S MAD WITH A FAVORITE TELL-TALE FROM MY CREEP-COLLECTION. SO HAVE THE SIGARETTE READY AND I'LL UPSET YOUR STOMACH WITH THE TUMMY-TURNER I CALL...

## PEARLY TO DEAD

OUR STORY BEGINS DURING WORLD WAR II, WHEN THE UNITED STATES MARINES WERE SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY INCHING ACROSS THE SOUTH PACIFIC AREA, INCHING AND BATTLING FOR EACH BLOODY ATOLL, EACH JAPANESE-IMPOSED CORAL ROCK. ONE DAY BLACK STARLESS NIGHT, A SMALL BOAT MOVED SILENTLY TOWARD THE CORAL REEF THAT RIMMED THE PEACEFUL LAGOON OF ONE OF THESE JAPANESE-HELD ISLANDS. INSIDE, TWO MEN CROUCHED QUIETLY, STUDYING THE DANCING FIRES ON THE SHORE ACROSS THE PLACID LAGOON...

BETTER DROP THE ANCHOR, PHIL. THIS IS ABOUT AS CLOSE IN AS WE CAN GET WITHOUT BEING SEEN.

RIGHT, LARRY.



THE ANCHOR RAN OVER THE SMALL BOAT'S SIDE AND DROPPED WITH A BUZZLED SPLASH INTO THE BLACK PACIFIC. THEN, STRANGLY, THE TWO MEN BEGAN TO UNDOSS...

WHILE I'M CLEARING THE STEEL NETTING, YOU START SETTING THE DEMOLITION CHARGES, PHIL.

CHECK?



THEY STOOD ALMOST NAKED IN THE PACIFIC NIGHT, MUSCLES RIMMING. THEY BENT AND SLID THE WEIRDLY SHAPED BLACK RUBBER FLIPPERS ONTO THEIR FEET... PULLED THEIR RUBBER MASKS WITH THE ROUND GLASS WINDOWS OVER THEIR FACES...



READY? GOT THE CHARGES... JIMMY... FUSES?

RIGHT! GOT YOUR WIRE CLIPPERS... UNDERWATER LAMP... JACK-SAM?

SILENTLY, THE TWO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY'S UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM... THE FABULOUS PROSWEN... SLID OVER THE SIDE OF THEIR SMALL BOAT AND INTO THE CHOPPY PACIFIC...



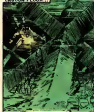
WELL, TAKE IT EASY, PHIL!

SEE YOU IN A WHILE, LARRY!

...AND WENT ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS. ...THE BUSINESS OF CLEARING THE WAY FOR THE INVASION OF THE FOLLOWING MORNING. THE ONE NAMED LARRY SLID DOWNWARD, FLICKING ON HIS LAMP, SEARCHING OUT THE TREACHEROUS PROPELLER SHATTERING STEEL NETTING...



...AS THE OTHER, THE ONE NAMED PHIL, SKIMMED BELOW THE SURFACE TO THE PLINGER BUNK IN THE LAGOON FLOOR...



WITH THE NETTING CLIPPED AND SAVED AND CUT AWAY AND RENDERED HARMLESS, LARRY SHOT TOWARDS PHIL TO HELP PLACE THE DEMOLITION CHARGES, HIS LANTERN BEAM RUNNING ACROSS THE SANDY BOTTOM OF THE LAGOON...



AND THEN, SUDDENLY, HE SAW IT... STRETCHING AWAY BELOW HIM IN THE GLOOMY MURKY DARKNESS... THE CYCLES BED...



AS LARRY CIRCLED OVER THE BED, STUDYING THE ABNORMALLY-LARGE SHELLD SEA CREATURES WITH THEIR PRICELESS-GLOBED GEMS IMBEDDED IN THEIR QUIVERING MEATY BODIES, PHIL SLID TOWARDS HIM, STARING WIDE-EYED.



THE TWO MEN SURFACED BESIDE THEIR BOAT, GASPING FOR BREATH...



DID YOU SEE IT, PHIL? THERE, GASP... THERE MUST BE A FORTUNE IN PEARLS IN THAT OYSTER BOAT I'M COME BACK... GASP... DOWN...

DON'T BE A FOOL, LARRY! I'VE SET THE CHARGES. C'MON! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

MOMENTS LATER, THE SMALL BOAT WAS HUNTING SEAWARD. BEHIND, THE DEMOLITION CHARGES EXPLODED IN THE PLACID LAGOON SIGNALING THE NIGHTY BATTLE RAGING OFFSHORE TO BEGIN THEIR BARRAGE. LARRY SWORE AGAIN THE DIN...



WE'LL COME BACK, PHIL! AFTER THIS CRAZY MISS IS OVER, WE'LL COME BACK FOR THOSE PEARLS. WE'LL BE BACK!

SURE, LARRY! SURE...

AT DAWN THE NEXT MORNING, THE ASSAULT BOATS STORMED THE QUIET LAGOON, AND PROPELLERS TURNED BLOOD INTO THE WATERS ABOVE THE OYSTER BED...



THE BEACHHEAD WAS SECURED. THE DEMOLITION TEAM'S WORK WAS DONE. LARRY AND PHIL WERE SHIPPED ELSEWHERE TO OTHER ISLANDS, WITH OTHER LAGOONS...



THEY SAY THIS ATOM BOMB WIPED OUT A WHOLE CITY, PHIL. WARE THE JAP'LL SURRENDER NOW THEN...

C'MON! STOP DREAMIN' ABOUT THOSE PEARLS! NOW GET READY!

V-J DAY! PEACE! IT CAME SOO-DEMY... AFTER THE SECOND A-BOMB WAS DROPPED, THE JAPANESE SIGNED AN UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER, AND THE WAR WAS OVER...



HEY, PHIL! SHIPPING ORDERS? WE'RE GOING HOME! WE'RE GETTING OUT!

LET'S SEE...

SAN FRANCISCO'S GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE CAME UP OUT OF THE MIST ONE MORNING. THE TROOPSHIP SLIPPED BENEATH IT AND HOBLED IN TOWARDS A PIER WHERE BANDS PLAYED AND CHILDREN CHEERED AND WOMEN BOBBED HAPPILY.



LOOK, PHIL! THERE'S GLADYS!

GLADYS? WHERE?

THEY CAME DOWN THE GANGPLANK TOGETHER, SIDE BY SIDE, LARRY AND PHIL. BUT THE GIRL THAT WAITED WITH TEAR-STAINED CHEEKS HAD EYES FOR ONLY ONE OF THEM



PHIL, D'ARLING...

GLADYS—BABY...

HEY... WHERE DOES AN ALIEN GO TO REGISTER?



LARRY TRIED TO HIDE THE JEALOUS ANGER... THE HURT THAT HE FELT. GLADY'S PREFERENCE HAD COME AS A GREAT SHOCK TO HIM...

"I... I WANTED TO TELL YOU, LARRY! BUT... WELL... I..."

"I UNDERSTAND, GLADY."

PHIL HAD WON AGAIN. IT HAD ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT... EVER SINCE THEIR COLLEGE DAYS. THEY'D BOTH COME OUT FOR THE SWIM TEAM...

"THAT'S GOOD TIME, SON! EN... WHAT DID YOU SAY YOUR NAME WAS?"

"LARRY! LARRY MILES!"

LARRY'D DONE HIS BEST, BUT PHIL... PHIL HAD DONE JUST A LITTLE BIT BETTER.

"CONGRATULATE A TON, BOY! THAT BEATS MILES'S TIME BY EIGHT FEET!"

"THE NAME'S PHIL CANNON, COACH!"

LARRY AND PHIL HAD BECOME FAST FRIENDS IN COLLEGE, BUT THERE WAS ALWAYS THAT RIVALRY BETWEEN THEM...

"COME ON, LARRY!"

"LET'S GO, PHIL!"

"MILES IS GREAT, AND CANNON IS BETTER. WE'VE BOTH WON SWIM TEAM THIS YEAR."

...NOT ONLY IN THE POOL... BUT ALSO ON THE CAMPUS.

"HEY, YOU TWO! I WANT YOU TO MEET GLADY HARDY! GLADY, MEET OUR TWO SWIM CHAMPS, LARRY MILES AND PHIL CANNON..."

"HI! VERY NICE! ARE YOU BUSY TONIGHT, MISS HARDY?"

"SORRY, LARRY! MISS HARDY ALREADY HAS A DATE WITH ME!"

WHEN GLADY'S HAD COME INTO THEIR LIVES, THE RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO BOYS HAD INCREASED. THEY BOTH FELL IN LOVE WITH HER...

"GLADY, YOU KNOW HOW I FEEL ABOUT YOU! SAY 'YES'! AND I'LL BUY YOU THE BIGGEST ENGAGEMENT RING IN THE STORE..."

"LARRY! I... I LIKE YOU... BUT... WELL, I JUST CAN'T TAKE UP MY MIND!"

THEN, PEARL HARBOR, AND THE U.S. WAS IN A WAR. THE NAVY HAD COME TO LARRY AND PHIL... ASKED THEM TO JOIN THE UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM... AND THEY'D ACCEPTED...

"TO LONG, BABY!"

"BYE!"

"I WILL! GOOD-BYE, BOYS! TAKE CARE!"

AND NOW THEY WERE BACK FROM THE WAR, STANDING ON A JAMMED PIER FULL OF RETURNED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS AND HAPPY LOVED ONES, AND PHIL HAD WON AGAIN...



"WE'RE... WE'RE GOING TO BE MARRIED, LARRY!"

"HAIEN, PHIL! I MEAN, WHAT ABOUT OUR SUZANNE OUT THERE... IN THE PACIFIC?"

"IT'LL BE A LONELY PLACE TO TAKE GLADYS ON OUR HONEYMOON, LARRY."



"OH, SURE! SURE! WELL, CONGRATULATIONS, YOU TWO!"

DISCHARGE! CIVILIAN CLOTHES AGAIN! FREEDOM FROM REGIMENTATION... DISCIPLINE! THEY WERE ALL LARRY'S NOW. AND A SECRET, JOOF! A MILLION DOLLAR SECRET! JUST ONE THING... ONE THING WASN'T BETTER! GLADYS!



"I PICKED UP THREE SURPLUS FLIPPERS AND WASHES, PHIL. I THOUGHT WE'D TRY THEM OUT TONIGHT."

"LOOK, FELLER! I'M SETTING MARRIED TOMORROW! HAVE A HEART!"

LARRY CONVINCED PHIL THAT AFTER HE WAS MARRIED THERE'D BE NO CHANCE TO TRY OUT THEIR EQUIPMENT, AND PHIL RELUCTANTLY AGREED. THEY DROVE OUT TO A LONELY BEACH...



"I PICKED THIS SPOT BECAUSE IT'S SO MUCH LIKE THAT LARSON, PHIL!"

"YEAH! IT... IT IS! WELL! LET'S GO!"

LARRY HAD PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY! WITH PHIL DEAD, GLADYS... THE SECRET OF THE PEARLS... EVERYTHING... WOULD BE HIS...



"LARRY! WHAT THE...?"

"IT'S GOING TO BE SUCH A FINE PHIL... A GOOD SWIMMER LIKE YOU... DROWNING!"

THEY STRUGGLED WILDLY, THERE IN THE FOAMING SURF OF THAT LONELY CALIFORNIA BEACH. LARRY HELD PHIL'S THROAT IN A VICE-LIKE GRASP, UNTIL PHIL'S BODY WENT LIMF AND LIFE LEFT IT AND IT SLIPPED FROM LARRY'S GRASP AND DANK BENEATH THE OCEAN WAVES...



AND LARRY CAME OUT OF THE WATER ALONE WITH A GRIM SMILE ON HIS FACE AND THE STORY HE'D TELL GLADYS SO CLEAR IN HIS MIND...



GLADYS LISTENED TO LARRY AS HE  
SIBBLED OUT THE STORY OF HOW  
THEY'D GONE SWIMMING...HE AND  
PHIL...AND PHIL'D SOKE DOWN...AND

...AND BEFORE I COULD  
GET TO HIM, HE WENT  
DOWN FOR GOOD. HE...  
HE MUST HAVE GOTTEN  
A CRAMP. I...I TRIED  
TO DIVE FOR HIM...BUT  
THE OREGONIAN!

NO?  
SOK...  
NO...ON  
LORD.



IT WOULD TAKE TIME LARRY  
DECIDED...TIME FOR GLADYS TO  
FORGET PHIL. IN THE MEANTIME,  
HE WOULD GO TO THE SOUTH  
PACIFIC...TO THE TINY ATOLL WITH  
ITS FABULOUS CYSTER BEG...AND  
MAKE HIS FORTUNE.

I'LL BE BACK IN  
THREE MONTHS,  
GLADYS. PERHAPS,  
BY THEN YOU WILL  
HAVE GOTTEN OVER  
THIS, AND MAYBE I,  
YOU AND I.

I'LL NEVER  
STOP LOVING  
HIM LARRY!  
SOK MEYER.



THE TRIP TO THE ATOLL WAS LONG,  
BUT LARRY DIDN'T MIND IT. ONCE ON  
BOARD, HE LOST NO TIME IN MAKING  
FRIENDS...

BABY, YOU'RE THE  
MOST GORGEOUS  
GOLL ON THIS SHIP!  
I...I GASP!

WELL...SO  
ON...DON'T  
JUST LEAVE  
ME HANG-  
ING!



WERE HIS EYES DECEIVING HIM? WAS THE FOAM AND  
THE SPRAZ AND THE CHURRING WATER BESIDE THE SHIP  
PLAYING TRICKS ON HIM, OR DID HE ACTUALLY SEE  
THE BLISTER WHITE BODY?



WHAT IS IT, LARRY?

IS THERE? IN THE WATER?  
I...I...NO? IT CAN'T BE!  
I MUST BE SEEING THINGS!

AND WAS THE FOUL ODOR OF THE SEA AND DECAY  
AND ROTTING FLESH THAT BEARED HIS NOSTRILS  
WHEN HE OPENED HIS CABIN DOOR THAT NIGHT JUST  
LARRY'S IMAGINATION?



CHUCK...

WAS IT A DREAM? OR DID LARRY ACTUALLY SEE THE  
WHITE PULPY FISH-FITTED FACE IN THE PORTHOLE  
THAT NIGHT WHEN HE'D BEEN STARTLED OUT OF A SOUND  
SLEEP?



HUH? WHO...WHO...GOOD LORD!

AND WAS IT THE SEA, OR DID HE ACTUALLY HEAR  
THAT LAUGHTER...THAT RIPPING BLOOD-CUR-  
DLING LAUGHTER COMING IN FROM THE MURKY FOS  
BEYOND THE SHIP THE NIGHT HE STROLLED THE  
DECK ALONE?



WHO...WHO'S OUT  
THERE?

THE SHIP DOCKED AT TARTI AND LARRY LOST NO TIME IN HIRING A PLANE TO TAKE HIM SOUTH TO THE ATOLL.



CAN YOU LAND THIS CRAFT IN A LAGOON?

I CAN DROP IT ON A DAME, MISTER!

ON THAT PLANE TRIP SOUTH... SWIMMING LOW OVER THE BLUE PACIFIC... WAS LARRY CRAZY... OR DID HE SEE IT AGAIN... THERE JUST BELOW HIM... THAT ASHER, PULPY, BLOATED FORM...



I'M AFRAID, MISTER CANNON, AIR SICK?

CHUCK... A LITTLE, I GUESS.

THE ATOLL CAME UP... A PEARL AGAINST A BLUE BATH SEA-LINING... GUARDING ITS OWN PEARL TREASURE. LARRY CAST HIS FEARS FROM HIS MIND WHEN HE SAW IT...



THERE IT IS! LAND IN THAT LAGOON!

RIGHT!

THE TINY SEAPLANE CAME DOWN GENTLY AND BAT BOOBING QUIETLY IN THE BLUE LAGOON AS LARRY UNPACKED HIS GEAR, REMOVED THE FLIPPERS AND THE RUBBER GLASS-WINDOWED MASK, AND BEGAN TO UNPACK.



HEY! WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU GOING TO DIVE FOR SOMETHING?

YEP! THERE'S AN OYSTER BED IN THIS LAGOON... WITH PEARLS THE SIZE OF FOUR FIST, AND I'M GOING TO GET ME A FEW.

TINY FISH SCATTERED BEFORE HIM AS LARRY SHOT DOWNWARD. HE PASSED THE OLD RUSTED NETTLES... THE BURKEN ASSAULT BOATS... THE WATER-LOGGED BLASTED PILING. AND THEN HE SAW IT... THE OYSTER BED. HE SWAM TOWARD IT... EAGERLY...



LARRY WAS SO BUSY WRENCHING THE LARGEST OYSTER HE COULD FIND FROM THE SANDY BOTTOM THAT HE NEVER NOTICED THE PUTRID, SLIMY, WHITE FORM DRIFT TOWARD HIM. AND WHEN ITS BLOATED ARMS CLOSED AROUND HIS NECK, AND THE ROTTER FACE GRINNED AT HIM, IT WAS TOO LATE.



PHH... CHOK... SLURP...

HEH, HEH! YEP, SIDDIES! THAT'S MY TAPL. THE PILOT OF THE SEAPLANE WAITED AROUND FOR LARRY TO COME UP FOR SEVERAL HOURS. FINALLY, HE SHRUGGED, WENT THROUGH LARRY'S PANTS, EXTRACTED THE MONKEY FROM HIS WALLET, TORROR THE REST OF LARRY'S GEAR INTO THE LAGOON, AND TOOK OFF. AND YOU'LL TAKE OFF WHEN YOU RECEIVE YOUR KIT FROM THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB. NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO C.R. I'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAIL THE VAULT OF HORROR! BYE! E.C. THAT IS!



# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Heh, heh! The every mail I'm getting lately! Nobody writes criticizing me anymore, nobody writes threatening letters! Now all I get is poetry, song titles, book titles, and pretentious looks like the whole country's gone crazy! Well, as Lincoln said, "To get to give the people what they want" (Lincoln said THAT—ed.) Yeah, JOE LINCOLN, he runs a defense movie outside of Omaha, Nebraska; Specializes in 3-D pictures. Only ones equipped with polaroid watchfields allowed. (Oh, hah! We thought you meant IRVING LINCOLN—and I IRVING LINCOLN? When does HE do? He goes around saying "You gotta give the people what they want"—ed.) Oh, HEM! So anyway, here are the latest additions to E.C.'s HORROR HIT PARADE, suggested by Bernie and Sunday Goshling of Spring Valley, New York; Bill Rosen and Joe Higgins of Brooklyn, N. Y.; Mike Larkin of Philly; P. Steele of Wisconsin; W. Donald Kesselman of Chicago; Tony Egan and Gregory Rosenau of N. Y. C.; Donny Skanes of Arizona, Pa.; Maurice Byron of Alexandria, Ind.; Dennis Bortinbank of Green Springs, Miss.; and Peggy DeMare and Lloyd Gelin of Detroit, Mich.

TERRY'S SCREAM (from SLIME-LIGHT)  
BEAUTIFUL BEAUTIFUL GROUND EYES  
AFTER THE MATE IS OVER  
SEVEN BLOODLESS NIGHTS (MAKE ONE  
VAMPIRE WEASE)  
I BELIEVE (THAT FOR EVERY DROP OF  
BLOOD THAT FALLS, A VAMPIRE GROWS)  
WITH A TONG IN MY HEART  
I'M SLITTING BY THE WINDOW (WATCHING  
THE BLOOD-DROPS FALL)  
LYNN-BOATS ARE A-COMIN  
WITH THESE GLANDS  
THE SCREAM OF TORTURE  
I'M WINCING WITH SPEARS IN MY THROAT  
RATTLE RHYTHM OF THE REPULSIVE  
ON THE FAULTS AGAIN WITH YOU  
ON THE TAINTED SIDE OF THE MEAT  
SQUAWK YOU WERE HERE!  
WHO'S GONY NOW?  
DEEP IN THE HEART OF TEX  
WITH MY HEAD WIDE OPEN I'M SCREAMING  
WHEN YOU GORE HER TWO-LIPS  
YOU'D BE SO NICE TO COME GROWN TO  
IDA TASTES LIKE APPLE CIDER  
THE GIRL THAT I HURT  
SEND ME ONE DOZEN POSTS  
TUNE IS GURRING OUT ALL OVER

And here are some more additions to our LIVED LITERATURE LIBRARY, sent along by Benny Crow of Dallas, Texas; Jimmy Teal of Knoxville, W. Va.; and Donny Mares of Springfield, Ill.

BOUEN FAMILY ROBINSON  
WITHERING AGENTS  
NOW GREEN WAS MY SALLY  
THE LASH OF THE MORGANS

THE GIRLAND OF GODS  
GREAT EXPECTATIONS (last)  
GREAT RECOGNITIONS  
AGONY AND CLEOPATRA  
ROMEO THE GHUOL WE EY  
SORMA'S DOOM

And now for some MORRID MOVIES, produced by David Gould of Grand Lake Stream, Maine, and Sam Campbell and Amalia Alexander of Waynesville, N. C.

A STREETCAR NAMED MY SINE  
TWE AFRICAN'S SPLEEN  
HIGH STREWN  
MUNG BEES  
CALL ME MAD MAN  
THE GREATEST CHUCK ON EARTH  
WRING SOLOMON'S SPINE  
THE FARMER TAKES A LIFE

Next, PULSATING POGROMS, beamed in by Web Andrews of Melrose, Miss., and Willard Johnson of Jackson, Miss.

WATCHIT SQUAD  
BLIND MATE  
MENACE DAY  
MARTIN SLAM  
SCARY MOORE  
RUB HOPE  
DEAD SKELETON

Last, and probably least, some PERVERTED POETRY.

## BANQUET

We had some friends in to dinner  
Everything was perfectly swell  
But mother spoiled the party  
She simply didn't taste well

—Lee Ellen Gie  
Brooklyn, N. Y.

## AUCTION

Shocking, Delirious, Dark,  
His Head Bailed off the Neck

Now that the adjustments are over, watch out! Here comes the commercial E.C. FAN-ASPECT CLUB! Don't be a slacker! Join the club! Send in two bits and get your bits. Turn to the corner, and you'll discover the blank, croak! SUBSCRIPTIONS! By the way, one a dollar for eight! THIRD ANNUAL TALE OF HORROR! The best for you from "El Seed is a quarter" we'll send you your order!

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The Crypt-Keeper  
Room 705, Dept. 60  
125 Lafayette Street  
N. Y. C. 10003



## CHOICE!



The ground was soft and clinging as Farraday slipped out of the thick forest surrounding the prison wall. There was a heavy mist rising from the ground, and all around him he could hear the incessant clamor of the jungle. The long, dark foliage swished eerily in the hot night air... it would partially cover the sound of his feet moving through the oozy jungle lanes.

Farraday moved along stealthily, like a hunted animal, his plan of escape churning in his mind. If he could creep through the jungle into the miserable little seacoast town and hide in one of the grimy steamboats moored at the crumbling wharfs, in a week or so he'd probably be gone forever from this cursed tropical penal colony. The discomfort and pain of escaping through the jungle was nothing compared to the prospect of another five years in prison, Farraday thought to himself. He HAD to get away, at all cost, for he could never live through the prison sentence, anyway. The giant flies and vicious mosquitoes and stinging, blood-sucking spiders swarming over the camp by the millions would eat him alive long before he was ready for release!

Farraday paused momentarily, listening intently for a sound of alarm. Then he straightened up, ignoring the fact that his sweating hands were trembling with nervousness, and plunged on through the stifling undergrowth. They hadn't discovered yet that he was gone... every minute he could gain would help immeasurably in his getaway.

He was coming to clearer ground now: the earth was dry and sun-parched, the trees were spaced further apart and the grass was lower and less matted. He'd have to be careful here, for he could be spotted as he moved through the open valley. He crouched again and

moved slower, his body bent like an ape swinging along the jungle floor. About 50 yards he proceeded, then his heart almost stopped beating... a shrill whistle had sounded far back. His escape had been detected! In another moment the guards would be overrunning him and dragging him back so that insect-infested hell behind the towering stone walls!

Farraday knew his only chance was to dig a shallow grave and slip into it, praying that the darkness of the night would hide him. With a frenzy born of desperation he began to scoop up the earth at his feet; in a few moments he had cleared a patch large enough for his body. He dropped face-down into it without a second's hesitation.

Almost before he had drawn another breath he was aware of a clammy tangling spreading over his exposed flesh. It was pitch-black, but he knew without seeing what it was that was swarming over him: he had plunged headlong into a nest of white maggots! Already they were tearing at his skin, their stinging pincers probing his cheeks and jaw, sinuous lines writhing into his nostrils and mouth. His eyelids felt as if they had caught fire... but Farraday didn't move a muscle. Even as he felt the stabbing pain at his throat and realized that the skin of his chest, inside his shirt, was being torn loose, he could think of only one thing. He was in fiery agony, but if only he could stay here in this shallow trench, the guards would never find him! And as his mind reeled and his body twitched uncontrollably as his blood trickled from a thousand deadly wounds... he was soled by one thought: if the guards couldn't find him, he wouldn't have to endure the horrors of prison life again... wouldn't be assailed by giant flies and the savage spiders!



YER, KIDDIES! E.C.'S NEW HUMOR MAG, **PANIC** IS ON SALE. SO RUSH DOWN TO YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND AND GET YOUR COPY. HOWEVER IF YOU DON'T WANT TO MISS ANY FOOTBALL GAMES... IF YOU WANT TO READ **PANIC** AND SIT IN THE BOWL AT THE SAME TIME... **SUBSCRIBE!** FILL OUT THE COUPON AND MAIL TO...

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HERE'S A BUBBLY LITTLE TALE OF  
TITANIC TERROR! I CALL IT...

# PRAIRIE SCHOONER



MILDRED JACKSON, FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR OF HER HOUSE AND SCREAMED WITH JOY. HE STOOD ON THE PORT-  
STARVED FRONT PORCH, DRESSED RESPLENDENTLY IN HIS CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM, HIS FACE BRONZED FROM FORTY  
YEARS AT SEA. HIS EYES GLOD AND SCINTILLING, HIS MOUTH SMILED, HIS TWO SUIT CASES BEHIND HIM...



ISRA! ISRA! WHY DIDN'T YOU WRITE ME  
YOU WERE COMING TO VISIT? OH, ISRA.  
IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

HELLO, MILLY. GOT A PLACE FOR  
YOUR OLD SEA GOD BROTHER TO  
BUNK DOWN FOR A SPELL?

MILLY LED ISRA INTO THE PARLOR...



THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR  
YOU HERE, ISRA. YOU KNOW  
THAT. HOW LONG WILL YOU  
STAY?

JUST A SPELL,  
MILLY! JUST TILL  
I DECIDE WHAT I'M  
GONNA DO NEXT.  
Y'SEE... THEY TOOK  
AWAY MY SHOP. THEY  
RETIRED ME.



RETIRED... OH,  
ISRA. I'M SO  
SORRY.

YEA, MY SAILIN' DAYS ARE  
OVER, MILLY. I'M A LAND-  
LUBBER, NOW. WELL, WHERE  
DO I STOW MY BEAR?



THAT WAS HOW EZRA JACKSON CAME TO LIVE WITH HIS SISTER MILDRED. AT FIRST, MILLY WAS VERY HAPPY TO HAVE HIM. AFTER ALL, SHE WAS AN OLD MAID...AND EZRA WAS COMPANY, BUT AS TIME WENT ON, EZRA BEGAN TO DO STRANGE THINGS.



EZRA! WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT THROUGH YOUR SPY-GLASS?

NOTHING!

ONE NIGHT, MILLY WAS ROUSED OUT OF A SOUND SLEEP BY HEAVY PAINS STRIKING HER ROBERTLY...



WHAT...WHAT'S WRONG, EZRA? WHAT IS IT?

GET UP, YOU LATE SLEPER. YOU'RE LATE FOR YOUR WATCH, AND IF YOU EVER DO THIS AGAIN, I'LL HAVE YOU FANNED IN THE BRID.

IT WAS OBVIOUS TO POOR MILLY THAT HER ELDER BROTHER WAS ILL...MENTALLY ILL. THE SHOCK OF BEING RETIRED HAD BEEN TOO MUCH FOR HIM. HIS MIND HAD SHATTERED. HE FANCIED HIMSELF AT SEA AGAIN... THE HOUSE, HIS SHIP...AND SHE, HIS CREW.



YOU CALL THIS CLEAN? I WANT THIS DECK SCURBED TILL I CAN SEE MY REFLECTION! UNDERSTAND?

YES, EZRA!



I SAID WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT WITH YOUR SPY-GLASS?

N-O-T-H-I-N-G, MILLY! I WAS JUST WATCHING THAT SHIP ON THE HORIZON!



SHIFFPFT... EZRA! THIS IS KANSAS! THERE AREN'T ANY SHIPS ON THE HORIZON. THERE ISN'T ANY WATER... FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES!

FROM THAT NIGHT ON, MILLY WAS FORCED TO "STAND WATCH" SHE HAD TO MOVE THROUGH THE HALLS OF THE OLD HOUSE FROM TWO A.M. TO DAWN, CARRYING A LANTERN AND SHOUTING...



LOUDER, YOU BLITHERING IDIOT! LOUDER!

EVERY BELL AND ALL'S WELL!



DON'T "EZRA" ME! IT'S "YES, CAPTAIN JACKSON!" REMEMBER THAT! NOW, GET TO WORK, YOU BLISSY RAT!

Y-YES, CAPTAIN JACKSON.

MILLY HAD BEEN A SCHOOL TEACHER IN HER YOUNGER YEARS. SHE'D WORKED HARD AND MANAGED TO SAVE A SMALL AMOUNT OF MONEY. SHE'D USED PART OF IT TO BUY THE HOUSE SHE NOW LIVED IN. THE REST, SHE'D INVESTED WISELY, AND SHE'D BEEN ABLE TO LIVE COMFORTABLY. BUT WITH EZRA'S ARRIVAL, HER MEAGER INCOME WAS NOT ENOUGH...



SO MILLY WAS FORCED TO EARN EXTRA MONEY TO AUGMENT THE SMALL INCOME SHE DERIVED FROM HER INVESTMENTS. SHE HAD TO TAKE IN WASHING...



EZRA STOOD IN THE CENTER OF THE CELLAR FLOOR, STARES ABOUT HIM WITH WIDE BEAMING EYES...



MILLY WAS HELPLESS. SHE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE... EXCEPT, PERHAPS, TO HAVE EZRA PUT AWAY... SO SHE CALLED IN A CARPENTER... A PLUMBER...



EDRA STORMED ABOUT IN THE CELLAR, SHOUTING OUT HIS ORDERS...

RIP OUT THOSE WINDOWS. CLOSE 'EM UP. PUT UP FALSE WALLS. MARGONY PAMPELO WALLS. SET IN PORT HOLES. REAL PORT HOLES... THAT OPEN!

YES, MR. JACKSON.



CAPTAIN JACKSON? PUT OCEAN SCENES BEHIND THE PORT HOLES. HAND SHIP'S LANTERNS AROUND. PUT IN A BUNK. A GALLEY. A HEAD. MAKE EVERYTHING AUTHENTIC. THIS IS MY SHIP!

YES, CAPTAIN!



AND POOR MILLY WITHDREW HER LIFE'S SAVINGS FROM HER INVESTMENTS TO PAY FOR THE HOUSEHOLD...

A, TWO... 3,000 DOLLARS. WHERE YOU ARE, MR. GUNNER?

THANK YOU, MA'AM. I HOPE YOUR BROTHER IS HAPPY WITH THE JOB WE DID!



MILLY CAME "BELOW" CARRYING HER LAUNDRY BASKET FILLED WITH THE WASH SHE'D BEEN TAKING IN...

WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU DOING DOWN HERE WITH THAT?

I'VE GOT TO DO THE SHIP'S LAUNDRY, CAPTAIN. I'VE...



"BELOW" IN HIS SHIP'S QUARTERS, CAPTAIN JACKSON BELLOWED...

STAND BY TO CAST OFF. ENGINE ROOM. FULL SPEED ASTERN. ALL HANDS. MAN YOUR STATIONS... ON THE DOUBLE...



EDRA STRUCK OUT SAVAGELY...

YOU'LL DO THE LAUNDRY ON DECK, YOU SCULLION BEGGAR. GET OUT OF MY QUARTERS...

OWWWW...



WITH HER INVESTMENTS WIPED OUT AND THE INCOME FROM THEM GONE, MILLY HAD TO TAKE IN MORE WASH THAN SHE COULD HANDLE IN ORDER TO MEET EXPENSES. AND EIRA'S ANGER BECAME WORSE AND WORSE. . .

SCRUB OUT THAT HEAD, YOU FO'G'SLE BRUDGE!

Y-YES, CAPTAIN!

POOR MILLY WOULD ESCAPE, EVERY CHANCE SHE COULD GET, AND LOCK HERSELF IN THE UPSTAIRS BATHROOM IN ORDER TO DO THE WASH IN THE TUB. AND AS SHE SCRUBBED, SHE WOULD LISTEN TO EIRA'S RANTING AND RAVING.

EASE THE HELM! BYE 'ER MORE RUDDER! STEADY AS YOU GO! HARD APOFT! STEADY! STEADY GO!

DOE...DOE...



ONE HOT SUMMER'S DAY, EIRA STOOD AT THE OPEN PORT HOLE, SHOUTING OUT AT THE SEA-SCAPE SCENE BEYOND. . .

WHILE UPSTAIRS, DIRECTLY OVER-HEAD IN THE BATHROOM, MILLY PANTED OVER A LOAD OF WASH. . .

THE HOT WATER, RUNNING INTO THE TUB OVER THE SOAKING CLOTHES, SENT UP CLOUDS OF STEAM WHICH FILLED THE LOCKED BATHROOM.



ANDY! ANDY THERE! SHIP ANDY! HOLD FAST. STAND BY!



SUDDENLY MILLY CLUTCHED AT THE EXCRUCIATING PAIN IN HER CHEST, TOPPLING OVER. . .

AND AS HER HEART-PAIRED AND HER LIFE FADED WITH IT, THE BOILING WATER OVERFLOWED THE TUB, POOLING ABOUT HER PROSTRATE BODY, SINKING THROUGH THE BATHROOM FLOOR. . .



GASP...



IN HIS CELLAR SHIP'S QUARTERS, CAPTAIN JACKSON LISTENED AS THE WATER, LEAKING DOWN FROM THE OVERFLOWING BATHTUB ABOVE, FILLED THE SPACE BETWEEN THE FALSE MAHOGANY PANELED WALLS AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOUSE...

STORMY SEA TONIGHT! BATTEN DOWN THE MATCHES. WE'RE IN FOR A BLIZZ.



THE CELLAR FILLED WITH STEAM, CAPTAIN JACKSON STAGGERED TO THE PORT HOLES, SLAMMED THEM SHUT. THE PRESSURE OF THE WATER CRUMPLED THE PANELED WALLS...



UNTIL THE RISING HOT WATER REACHED HIS CHIN... HIS NECK... Poured INTO HIS MOUTH AND STERED HIS TONGUE... HIS THROAT... HIS LUNGS...



SUDDENLY, THE WATER BEGAN TO POUR THROUGH THE OPEN PORT HOLES...



SLOWLY THE WATER ROSE IN THE CELLAR, BOILING, BUBBLING, BUSTLING EDGAR'S AGED BODY, BUT HE STUBBORNLY STOOD FAST...



HIS, HEST? YEP, KIDDER. THAT'S MY MURDER MARINE OFFERING. EZRA FINALLY EGGED UP... IN HOT WATER! THIS IS THE FIRST CASE ON RECORD BY THE WAY, OF A CAPTAIN GOING DOWN WITH HIS SHIP IN THE MIDDLE OF A KANSAS PRAIRIE... IN A CELLAR AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE CRYPT-KEEPER WHO IS WAITING TO WIND UP MY REEL RAG! REMEMBER! IF YOU'RE A FAN, AND AN ADDICT. JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB. 'BYE, HOYT!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEY, HEY! AND NOW, IT'S MORROD-WEAL-TIME. WELCOME TO THE HAUNT OF FEAR, CREEPS. THIS IS YOUR REVOLTING RESTAURATEUR, THE OLD WITCH, READY TO BLING SLIME...AND WIND UP LIKE MYOCH-MAH FOR THIS IDIOTIC ISSUE. CARE FOR SOME SEA FOOD? WELL, HERE'S A TASTY TERROR TID-BIT TO TURN YOUR STOMACH. I CALL THIS SLOP-SERVING...

## HALF-BAKED!

CAULIN SUGAR STOOD IN THE SPOTLESS KITCHEN OF "THE SEA SNELL RESTAURANT" STARRING IN MOR-BID FASCINATION AT THE GULMIRING, BLUE-GREEN, SPINY-LEGGED CLAWED CREATURES THAT SCRATCHED DRILL AROUND AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BUTTER TUB. CAUTIOUSLY, HE REACHED IN AND PULLED ONE OF THEM FROM THE TUB, HOLDING IT UP. HE LAUGHED RADICALLY...

YOU'RE HERE, YOU DISGUSTING THING. NOW, NOW! DON'T STRUGGLE! IT'S NO USE! HEH, HEH!

CAULIN REACHED FOR A KNIFE, REPLACED THE STRUGGLING LOBSTER, BELLY UP ON THE RUDE WOODEN KITCHEN TABLE AND GRINNED DOWN AT IT.

FIRST, WE SPLIT YOU OPEN... FROM HEAD TO TAIL... LIKE SO...



THE LOBSTER SQUIRMED. CALVIN FORCED THE KNIFE BLADE AGAINST ITS SOFT-SHELLED UNDERSIDE AND, WITH A SLIGHT SAWING MOTION, CRUNCHED IT THROUGH. THE LOBSTER, NOW PRACTICALLY SEVERED IN HALF, STILL WRIGGLED ITS SPINY LEGS AND WAVED ITS HUGE CLAWS AWKWARDLY...



HEH, HEH. NOW I KNOW THAT I HAD SOME *SENSITIVE* INSTRUMENT SO THAT I COULD HEAR YOUR BLOOD-CURLING SQUEALS, LITTLE UGLY MONSTER

CALVIN MOVED THE THRASHING SPLIT LOBSTER ONTO A RACK AND DROD IT INTO THE STOVE, BELOW THE LICKING BLUE FLAMES OF THE BRIGOLET...



AND NOW, WE *BROKE* YOU ALIVE. WE LISTEN TO YOU *MOES* AND POP UNTIL YOU TURN ORANGE-RED AND YOU STOP YOUR SQUEALING.

CALVIN STARED INTO THE STOVE AT THE BRIGOLET LOBSTER. HIS EYES BLINKED ALMOST MANICALLY AS HE WATCHED ITS STRUGGLING ABATE...



DEAD, ALREADY, BLAST IT!

CALVIN GRINNED...

I MUST LOWER THE FLAME SO THAT THE *BEST* ONE WILL DIE SLOWER!



BEHIND CALVIN, THE SEA BIRD'S RESTAURANT'S CHEF SHOOK HIS HEAD AS HE WATCHED HIS EMPLOYEE.



WHY DO YOU TAKE SUCH SADISTIC DELIGHT IN KILLING THOSE POOR LOBSTERS, MR. DUBAN?

I HAVE THEM, JOHN!

CALVIN'S FACE SPUN GRIM AS HE TURNED TO HIS CHEF...



I HATE UGLY AND HORRIBLE CREATURES! HORRIBLE CREATURES SHOULD DIE HORRIBLY!

A LOBSTER IS A LIVING THING, MR. DUBAN... NO LIVING THING SHOULD BE MADE TO SUFFER

A LOBSTER IS HORRIBLE... UGLY! IT DESERVES TO SUFFER, JOHN. ITS OWN UGLINESS MERITS AN UGLY DEATH...

PERHAPS... TO A LOBSTER... IT IS YOU WHO ARE UGLY, MR. DUBAN!



MEANWHILE, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, A FISH MAID UP THE BEACONST FROM THE SEA SHELL RESTAURANT, A FISHERMAN GUIDED HIS BOAT OVER THE TUBBING OCEAN SHELLS TO A CORK FLOAT FROM WHICH FLEW A TATTERED FLAG.



THE LAST ONE. IF THERE IS NOTHING IN THIS ONE, WE WILL HAVE NO MONEY FOR FOOD!

THE FISHERMAN PULLED UP BESIDE THE BOBBING MARKER AND PULLED IT INTO HIS SEA SKIFF. SLOWLY, TEDIOUSLY, HE HAULED IN THE DRIPPING LINE THAT WAS FASTENED TO THE CORK FLOAT...



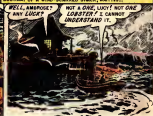
I CANNOT UNDERSTAND IT. ALL ALONG THE COAST, OTHER LOBSTER FISHERMEN ARE FINDING TWO, MAYBE THREE LOBSTERS IN EACH OF THEIR POTS. FOR TWO WEEKS NOW, I HAVE NOT FOUND ONE!

FINALLY, THE LOBSTER TRAP BURNED, AND THE FOUL SCENT OF THE FISH HEAD, PLACED WITHIN IT AS BAIT, BECAME THE FISHERMAN'S NOSTRILL...



EMPTY! ALL EMPTY! NOT ONE LOBSTER IN ANY OF MY POTS.

SADLY, THE FISHERMAN GUIDED HIS INBOARD BACK TO THE BEACH WHERE A WOMAN AND CHILD STOOD IN THE DOORWAY OF A WIND-SCARRED SHACK, WAITING...



WELL, AMBROSE? ANY LUCK?

NOT A ONE, LUCKY! NOT ONE LOBSTER! I CANNOT UNDERSTAND IT.

THE FISHERMAN ENTERED HIS DAUGHTER'S SHACK AND SAT DOWN WEARILY...

THE CHILD BEGAN TO CRY...



PERHAPS TOMORROW, TOMORROW, TOMORROW... WE HAVE SAID THAT FOR TWO WEEKS! AMBROSE...



POPPA... SON... I AM HUNGRY. I WILL MAKE THE BOY SOME FISH, AMBROSE.

FISH! THE BOY NEEDS MILK, LUCK. LOBSTERS COULD BUY HIM MILK. LOBSTERS BRING A GOOD PRICE, BUT I CANNOT CATCH THEM! MY POTS ARE EMPTY!

PERHAPS TOMORROW YOUR LUCK WILL CHANGE, AND YOUR POTS WILL BE FULL, AMBROSE.





THE SEASHELL RESTAURANT WAS NOTED FOR ITS BAKED LOBSTER. PEOPLE CAME FROM MILES AWAY TO FEAST ON THE SUCULENT WHITE MEAT DIPPED IN BUTTER SAUCE. CALVIN TARGAN DID A THRIVING BUSINESS.

THE LOBSTER WAS ESPECIALLY FASTY TODAY, MR. DUBAN.

THANK YOU, MR. DUBAN. SOO EVENING, COME AGAIN.

AFTER CLOSING TIME THAT NIGHT, JOHN, THE CHEF, REMINDED CALVIN...

WE'RE BETTING LOW ON LOBSTERS, MR. DUBAN. IF WE HAVE A GOOD CROWD TOMORROW, WE'LL RUN OUT!

I'LL PICK SOME UP IN THE MORNING... ON THE WAY IN? GOOD-NIGHT, JOHN.

JOHN NODDED AND LEFT. CALVIN LISTENED AS THE CAR MOTOR BECKED AWAY INTO THE NIGHT, THEN TURNED TO THE ALMOST EMPTY TUB...

HIDEOUS, DISGUSTING CREATURES!

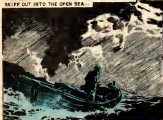
AFTER A WHILE, CALVIN LEFT THE RESTAURANT. HE LOOKED UP CAREFULLY, BUT HE DID NOT GET INTO HIS CAR. INSTEAD, HE WALKED DOWN TO THE BEACH...

BLAST IT! THERE'S A MOON OUT TONIGHT. WELL, I'LL HAVE TO CRASH IT.

HE MOVED DOWN THE BEACH TO WHERE A SEA SHIRT WAS MOORED. UNTYING IT, CALVIN PUSHED THE CRAFT INTO THE COOCHING BREAKERS.

THE INBOARD MOTOR COUGHED AND SPUTTERED, THEN BEGAN TO HUM EVERLY. CALVIN GUIDED THE SKIFF OUT INTO THE OPEN SEA...

A FEW MILES OUT, HE PULLED UP BESIDE A BOBBING MARKER FROM WHICH A TATTERED FLAG FLAPPED...



AMBROSE, THE LOBSTER FISHERMAN, PEEED THE FLOOR OF HIS DINGY SHACK. LUCY, HIS WIFE, WATCHED HIM WITH SAD EYES.



COME TO BED, AMBROSE. YOU MUST GET UP EARLY.

I AM NOT SLEEPY, LUCY. I AM THINKING ABOUT MY LOBSTER POTS.

AMBROSE STOPPED PEEING. HE LISTENED. FAR AWAY OVER THE BEAR OF THE GULF POUNDING THE HEAVY BEACH, AMBROSE HEARD A SOUND... A DULL HUMMING SOUND.



A SEA SKIFF... OUT THERE IN THE NIGHT. SO THAT'S IT?

WHAT IS IT, AMBROSE?

AMBROSE POINTED OUT TO SEA. OUT TO THE DISTANT TOWING SMELLS.

SOMEONE'S OUT THERE. THAT'S WHY MY LOBSTER POTS ARE ALWAYS EMPTY. SOMEONE IS STEALING MY LOBSTERS.

AMBROSE? WAIT!



AMBROSE WAS OUT OF THE DOOR OF HIS WEATHER BEATEN SHACK IN A FLASH.

AMBROSE! COME BACK!

I'LL GET HIM, LUCY! I'LL GET HIM!



FAR OUT ON THE MOONLIT WAVES, CALVIN DUGAN LIFTED A LOBSTER POT INTO HIS SEA SKIFF.

TWO BEAUTIFIES! THAT'S SEVENTEEN ALREADY AND I'VE ONLY RAISED HALF OF HIS TRAPS...



SUDDENLY CALVIN LOOKED UP. SCARCELY ONE HUNDRED YARDS AWAY, ANOTHER SEA SKIFF GLIDED TOWARD HIM SILENTLY.



IT'S THE LOBSTER FISHERMAN. HE MUST HAVE ROWED OUT. THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T HEAR HIM! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

CALVIN STRUGGLED WITH HIS INBOARD, TRYING TO START IT. THE OTHER SEA SKIFF PULLED ALONGSIDE. THE FISHERMAN IN IT GLARED AT HIM WITH BURNING EYES.



SO? NO WONDER MR DUGAN HADN'T BOTHERED TO STOP BY LATELY TO SEE IF I WANT ANY LOBSTERS TO SELL. HE KNEW!

KEEP AWAY! AMBROSE! KEEP AWAY! I WARN YOU!

AMBROSE SHARLED...

YOU ONLY THIEF!  
YOU HIDEOUS MONSTER!  
MY CHILD HAS GONE  
WITHOUT MILK AND  
MEAT AND CLOTHES  
BECAUSE OF YOU!

I'LL PAY  
YOU,  
AMBROSE!  
I'LL PAY...



AMBROSE SCREAMED

PAY ME!! REVERT!  
I'M GOING TO REPORT  
YOU TO THE POLICE.  
THEY'LL THROW  
YOU IN JAIL, WHERE  
YOU BELONG!

DON'T BE  
A FOOL,  
AMBROSE!  
I'LL PAY  
YOU WELL  
TO FORGET  
THIS!



NO! I WON'T TAKE  
YOUR MONEY! IT'S  
JAIL FOR YOU,  
JAIL...

YOU  
FORCE  
ME TO DO  
THIS,  
AMBROSE!



THE KNIFE BLADE IN CALVIN OUSAN'S HAND  
BLINDED IN THE MOONLIGHT...

NOW, I'LL HAVE TO KILL YOU,  
AMBROSE... TO KEEP YOU  
FROM TALKING...



AMBROSE'S SHRIEK ECHOED ACROSS THE HEAVING WATER  
AS CALVIN PLUNGED THE KNIFE INTO HIS WRITHING BODY  
AGAIN AND AGAIN...



THEN, CALVIN LAID AMBROSE INTO HIS SEASKIRT.



... AND CHOPPED A HOLE IN THE FLOORBOARDS, LETTING  
THE SEA WATER IN...



SLOWLY, THE BOAT, WITH AMBROSE'S BODY, BANKED BELOW THE TOSSENG OCEAN WAVES.



CALVIN STARTED HIS INBOARD AND SLIDED HIS SKIFF BACK TO THE BEACH...



...AND LOADED THE BUTTERTUB WITH THE STOLEN LOBSTERS INTO HIS CAR TRUNK.



HE'S STARTED HOME...ROARING DOWN THE COAST ROAD AT BREAKNECK SPEED...WHEN THE BLOW-OUT OCCURRED...



AS CALVIN'S LURCHING CAR SPUN OVER, THE STEERING WHEEL SHATTERED, RIPPING INTO HIS BODY...TEARING...FLASHING...



HE LAY THERE, FUMING, SQUIRMING, HIS BODY ALMOST SPLIT IN TWO, AS THE OVERTURNED CAR CAUGHT FIRE AND THE FLAMES LICKED AT HIM AND HE SCREAMED AND SHRIELED AND WAS BROILED ALIVE.



HIS, HED! THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDER! CALVIN ENDED UP LIKE THE LOPSTERS HE'D BEEN STEALING. WHEN I CAME UPON HIS BURNING CAR, HE WAS JUST ABOUT GONE. I WAS SO MAD THERE WEREN'T A DROP OF BUTTER SAUCE AROUND! AND TALKING ABOUT SAUCE, YOU'D BETTER HURRY UP AND JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB! REMEMBER, MEMBERSHIP IS LIMITED TO 152,000,000 PEOPLE. SO DON'T LOSE OUT! GET YOUR FULL-COLOR CERTIFICATE, YOUR EMERGENCY



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# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING



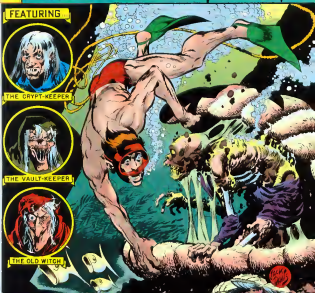
THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE VAULT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH





# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! I SEE YOU'RE *HUNGRY* FOR HORROR AGAIN. WELL, REST ASSURED, YOUR *APPETITE* WILL BE SATISFIED. IN FACT, WHEN YOU'RE *THROUGH* WITH THIS *PUTRID PERIODICAL*, YOU WILL HAVE *LOST* YOUR *APPETITE ENTIRELY*. SO DON'T JUST STAND THERE *DROOLING*. COME IN! WELCOME ONCE MORE TO THE *CRYPT OF TERROR*. THIS IS YOUR *HOST* IN *HOWLS*, YOUR *HAUSEATING NARRATOR*, THE *CRYPT-KEEPER*. READY TO *CHILL* YOUR SPINE AND *CURL* YOUR BLOOD WITH THE *SPINE-TINGLING TALE* OF TERROR I CALL...

## FOOD FOR THOUGHT



THE EVENING PERFORMANCE IS OVER AND THE CIRCUS GROUNDS ARE SILENT SAVE FOR THE FLAPPING OF CANNES AND THE OCCASIONAL SCURT OF A CADED ANIMAL. OVERHEAD, A COLD MOON ILLUMINATES THE MIDNIGHT LANDSCAPE. SUDDENLY, A SHADOWY FIGURE EMERGES FROM ONE OF THE DARKENED TENTS AND SLIDES SILENTLY ACROSS THE MIDWAY, WHISPERING...



THE WOMAN PEERS INTO THE SHADOWS, STRAINING TO SEE, HER HEART RACING. THE MAN STEPS INTO THE DIM COLD LIGHT, HIS ARMS EXTENDED...



OH, ERIC, DARLING...

MY DEAREST...

THEY EMBRACE... WARMLY... PASSIONATELY... HUNGRY LIPS... HOLDING CLOSE...



WHAT ABOUT CARL?

HE IS ASLEEP. HE DREAMS OF PAINS AND THE POWER HE HAS KNOWN...

THE MAN LOOKS INTO THE WOMAN'S EYES, GREY-GREEN IN THE MOONLIGHT

BUT YOU SAID YOU CAN ONLY READ THE THOUGHTS IN HIS MIND. HE WANTS YOU TO READ?

HE TALKS TO ME, ERIC. HE HAS ALWAYS TALKED TO ME WITH THE POWER HE HAS OVER ME!



THE MAN SHAKES HIS HEAD BADLY, STROKING THE WOMAN'S SOFT FLOWING HAIR...



WHY DID YOU EVER MARRY HIM, MARTHA?

IT WAS A MISTAKE, ERIC. I MISFOOT THIS PREAR OF NATURE... THIS ONCE IN A LIFETIME OCCURANCE... THIS ABILITY OF CARL'S TO PROJECT THOUGHTS AND MINE TO READ THEM... FOR LOVE!

WE DISCOVERED THIS ABILITY QUITE BY ACCIDENT MANY YEARS AGO. CARL IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED ITS GREAT VALUE. BEFORE I KNEW IT, WE'D TEAMED UP AS A MIND-READING ACT JOINED THIS TRAVELING CIRQUE, AND WERE MARRIED...

AND YOU'VE BEEN UNHAPPY EVER SINCE...



MISERABLE! I KNOW NOW THAT CARL NEVER LOVED ME. I WAS HIS SUBJECT... HIS THOUGHT-PROJECTION RECEIVER... A PIECE OF APPARATUS... NOTHING MORE. BUT NOW I KNOW WHAT REAL LOVE IS... NOW THAT I'VE MET YOU.



HE WOULD NEVER LET YOU GO. WOULD HE?

NEVER! IF I DO, HIS ACT GOES. HE'S NEVER GIVE ME A DIVORCE. THERE'S NO USE MY ASKING!

THEN WE WILL RUN AWAY... JOIN ANOTHER CIRQUE. I HAVE HAD MANY OFFERS. AN ANIMAL TRAINER IS IN GREAT DEMAND.



THE WIND SIGHS ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS, WHISPERS AMONG THE TENT ROPES, GASPS AGAINST THE CANVAS... CARRYING THE SIGNS, THE WHISPERS, THE GASPS OF THE LOVERS IN THE SHADOWS... AND IN HIS TENT, CARL STIRS UNEASILY... OPENS HIS EYES...



MARTA, I. I. MARTA? MARTA?

HET BED? IT IS EMPTY! WHERE COULD SHE BE?

CARL SLIPS ON A ROPE AND COMES OUT OF HIS TENT... OUT INTO THE WHISPERING, SIGHING, GASPING WIND.



VOICES? COMING FROM BEYOND THE NEW ANIMAL TRAINER'S TENT...

HIS VOICE... AND MARTA'S!

CARL MOVED THROUGH THE MOON-LIT NIGHT... HIS EYES BURNING LIKE HOT COALS... LISTENING...



...AND AT THE END OF THE MONTH WHEN I GET MY CHECK, WE WILL LEAVE. FOD AND I TOGETHER...

OH, YES... YES...

...LISTENING TO THE RAGGEDNESS IN HIS WIFE'S VOICE, THE PASSION, THE RUMOR...



...BUT LET'S NOT TALK ANYMORE, ERIC, DARLING. HOLD ME CLOSE...

SWOON MARTA...

...AND THEN, SLOWLY, HE RETURNED TO HIS TENT ONCE MORE. HE HAD HEARD ENOUGH...



SHE... SHE HAD FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HIM. SHE IS LEAVING ME. SHE... I... I MUST STOP HER!

WAS, NOW...

THE MOONLIGHT STREAMS THROUGH THE OPEN TENT-FLAP, FALLING ACROSS THE PRINT, BLACK LETTERS ON GOLD WHITE... THE LOCAL NEWSPAPER...



WHAT'S THIS? "BOOGIES DISINTERFERRED AT LOCAL BRAVE YARD... TORN TO PIECES AS IF ATTACKED BY WILD BEAST?"

OF COURSE! "TORN TO PIECES BY WILD BEAST" THAT'S HOW I CAN STOP HER FROM LEAVING. THAT'S IT?



LATER, WHEN MARTA RETURNS FROM HER rendezvous, AND CRAMBLES BACK INTO BED, CARL, PRETEXTING HE IS ASLEEP...



ONLY AFTER MARTA HAS SLIPPED OFF INTO DEEP SLEEPER, DOES CARL STIR...AND RISE...AND SO OUT OF THE TENT...



...AND CROSS DIRECTLY TO THE NEW ANIMAL TRAINER'S TENT WITH GUN IN HAND...



HUH? WHO'S THERE? WHO...

GET UP! WHO DON'T MAKE A SOUND!

ERIC STUMBLES TO HIS FEET...

WHAT'S THE MEANING? DO YOU OF THIS, CARL? PUT DOWN THAT GUN... WERE GOING TO RUN OFF WITH MY WIFE, ERIC? WELL, WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT! MORE!



CARL MOTIONS ERIC OUT OF THE TENT AND DOWN THE LONG SILENT MOUNTAIN TOWARD THE BIG TOP...



WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO, CARL?

I, ERIC? I'M NOT GOING TO DO ANYTHING! YOUR LION WILL DO THE WORK!

THEY CROSS THE TAMPARK FLOOR OF THE BIG TOP UNTIL THEY COME TO THE LION CAGE. THE TANNY BEAST PAGES BACK AND FORTH HUMBLY...



MY LION??

YES, ERIC. I'M GOING TO PUT YOU IN THE CAGE WITH HIM... WITHOUT YOUR GUN. WITHOUT ANYTHING... JUST YOU AND YOUR LION!

WITHOUT MY GUN?? I'D BE HELPLESS... PARALYZED... UNABLE TO DEFEND MYSELF! FOR GOD'S SAKE, CARL! HAVE PITY!



PITY IS AN EMOTION BELONGING TO THE PITIFUL, ERIC. GET IN...

CARL SWINGS OPEN THE BARRIED DOOR AND PUSHES. ERIC SCREAMS AND GOES SPRAWLING. THE LION SWARLS.



AND THEN, THE CIRCUS SOUNDING ECHO WITH THE BLOOD-CURLING SHRIEKS OF A MAN BEING TORN TO SHREDS BY THE RAZOR SHARP FANGS OF A BLOOD-THIRSTY BEAST.



ERIC'S ANGUISHED SHRIEKS AWAKEN MARTA AND SHE LOOKS AROUND WILDLY...



CARL'S TENT IS EMPTY! OUTSIDE THE TENT, FOOTSTEPS POUND UP THE HIGHWAY TOWARD THE BIG-BOY MARTA SLIPS ON A ROPE AND BURSTS FROM THE TENT...



SHE RUNS WITH THE REST OF THEM UNTIL THEY COME TO THE LION TRAINER'S CAGE.



SHE SCREAMS HIS NAME TWICE, AND THEN SHE JUST STANDS THERE, WATCHING THE BEAST LICK AT THE SLASHED AND SHREDDED BODY UNTIL SHE HAS TO TURN AWAY AS THE MALLARD SWEEPS OVER HER...



AND THEN, SICK, SHE RETURNS TO HER TENT AND SITS AND WAITS, CRYING, UNTIL CARL COMES IN WITH THAT EVIL, GRIN ON HIS COLD IMPASSIVE FACE...



BUT THERE IS NO COURT IN MARTA'S MIND AS TO HOW ERIC DIED. CARL'S BED WAS EMPTY WHEN ERIC'S SCREAMS AWAKENED HER. THE SHEETS WERE GONE.

I HAVE YOU!  
HAVE YOU?

YOU WILL GET  
OVER IT, MARTA!



THE NEXT DAY'S PERFORMANCE IS CANCELLED BECAUSE OF THE TRAGEDY. THE TENTS ARE LOWERED. THE CIRCUS PREPARED TO MOVE ON...

LOOK DUFF CARL!



IT HAPPENS SUDDENLY. WITHOUT WARNING, CARL IS HELPING WITH THE DISMANTLING OF THE SH-TOP WHEN THE MAIN SUPPORT TOPPLES.

GOOD LORD!



THE HEAVY POLE CRUSHES DOWNWARD UPON CARL, CRUSHING HIM GENTLY AT ITS MASSIVE WEIGHT.



AND WHEN THE HUGE SUPPORT IS LIFTED, CARL LIES DEADLY STILL. HIS GLAZED EYES STARE.

HE... HE'S DEAD!

TWO IN A ROW!  
THE CIRCUS IS  
JUNKED!

SOMEBODY  
GET HIS  
WIFE!



MARTA IS SUMMONED. SHE STANDS IMPASSIVELY OVER HER HUSBAND'S BODY, SHEDDING NO TEARS, SHOWING NO SIGN OF EMOTION...

IT... IT WAS AN  
ACCIDENT!  
MARTA! THE  
MAIN SUPPORT...

HE... HE WILL HAVE  
TO BE BURIED BEFORE  
WE CAN GO ON!



MARTA'S VOICE IS COOL, CALLOW, AS SHE ASKS

SOMEBODY SEND FOR AN  
UNDERTAKER...



MARTA LOOKS DOWN AT THE STILL FORM OF HER HUSBAND LYING ON THE TANGBARK FLOOR. AND EVEN THOUGH SHE READS HIS THOUGHTS, SHE SHOWS NO SIGN OF REGRETION...



MARTA! MARTA, I AM ALIVE! I'M NOT DEAD! MARTA! LISTEN TO ME! PLEASE! TRY TO HEAR WHAT I AM THINKING! I'M PARALYZED, MARTA! I'M NOT DEAD! I'M PARALYZED! I CAN SEE! I CAN HEAR! I CAN'T MOVE!

AS THE UNDERTAKER AND HIS ASSISTANT LIFT POOR CARL INTO THE WICKER, MARTA MOVES FORWARD.



MARTA! PLEASE! SAVE ME! I'M ALIVE! MARTA! I'M ALIVE! PARALYZED! NOT DEAD! PARALYZED! MARTA! PLEASE

WAIT!



OH, MARTA! THANK YOU! THANK YOU!

YES, MEXM?

PLEASE DON'T ENBARM HIM. BURY HIM AS HE IS, HE WOULD HAVE WANTED IT THAT WAY!

ANYTHING YOU SAY, MEXM?

MARTA! MARTA, NO!

MARTA LOOKS DOWN INTO PARALYZED EYES THAT CAN STILL SEE... WHISPERS INTO PARALYZED EARS THAT CAN STILL HEAR...

GOOD-BYE, CARL!

MARTA! OH, GOOD! MARTA...

AT THE FUNERAL, MARTA STANDS, HER FACE A GRANITE MASK, BESIDE THE TURNING PIT BELOW CARL'S COFFIN.



YOU CAN STOP THEM, MARTA! THERE'S STILL TIME! I KNOW YOU CAN HEAR ME. I KNOW IT! PLEASE! I BEG IF YOU DON'T LET THEM BURY ME ALIVE!

LOWER THE COFFIN!

AND EVEN THOUGH THE SOIL IS SHOVELED DOWN UPON THE COFFIN, CARL'S FRANTIC THOUGHT WIVES STILL COME THROUGH TO HER. TO HER AND ONLY HER. TO MARTA, WHO TURNS AND WALKS AWAY DOWN THE PATH LEADING OUT OF THE CEMETERY...



MARTA! DON'T DO THIS! PLEASE! SAVE ME! PLEASE! OHLORD MAKE HER SAVE ME!

CEME

THE AFTERNOON WINDS, THE NIGHT BREEZE COMES UP, WHISPERING OVER THE GRAVE MOUNDS. SIX FEET BELOW, IN HIS COFFIN, CARL CONCENTRATES AS THE PRECIOUS OXYGEN SLOWLY DISAPPEARS...

MARTA! COME BACK! COME SAVE ME! I'LL DO ANYTHING! ANYTHING! WHY FIT ON ME! HAVE PITY!



THE STARS COME OUT, WHITE PIN-POINTS IN A VELVET SHroud. A FIGURE MOVES OVER THE GRAVE MOUNDS...

I KNOW YOU ARE RECEIVING MY THOUGHTS, MARTA! I KNOW.



A SHOVEL DIGS INTO THE SOFT EARTH.

MARTA!  
MARTA,  
YOU DID  
COME! YOU  
DID!



THE DIGGING CONTINUES, THE SHOVEL SCOOPING AWAY THE SOFT EARTH. FINALLY THE LID OF THE COFFIN SWINGS BACK...

MARTA DARLING? I  
ON, LORD, YOU'RE  
NOT MARTA!



AND THEN AS CARL LIES HELPLESS, PARALYZED... LIKE A LION-TAMOR WITH-OUT A WHIP... FEELING THE RAZOR SHARP TEETH RIPPING AND TEARING AT HIS FLESH... UNABLE TO SCREAM AT THE EXCRUCIPATING PAIN, HE THINKS OF THE NEWSPAPER LYING IN THE MOONLIGHT. THE NEWSPAPER THAT FIRST GAVE HIM THE IDEA OF HOW TO KILL ERIC.

'BODIES DISINTERRED AT LOCAL GRAVE YARD  
TURN TO PIECES AS IF ATTACKED BY SOME  
WILD BEAST?' OH, LORD! THEY WERE WRONG!  
THIS IS NO BEAST! IT'S A GHOUL!



HER, NOW? YEP, KIDDEST? CARL  
ENDED UP JUST LIKE ERIC...  
BEING FORN TO BITS AND  
UNABLE TO DEFEND HIMSELF,  
AS FOR MARTA... SHE READ CARL'S  
FINAL THOUGHTS, AND GOT  
QUITE A MENTAL PICTURE  
OF WHAT WAS GOING ON! JUST  
ONE MORE INCIDENT IN THIS  
WHOLE SUBJECT AS THE BOP

CEMETERY FORE-  
MAN KEEPS TELLING  
HIS WORK CREWS,  
'DID THAT CRA-AY  
GHAUL?'  
WELL, Y.E.  
WANTS, DO.  
'BYE, NOW!





# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

REHEART SALUTATIONS, SLIME SAVORERS! NOW IT'S TIME FOR A JAUNT INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR. THIS IS YOUR HOST IN HORROR, THE HAULT-FEEPER, READY TO ENTERTAIN YOU IN C.E.'S MAG WITH A FAVORITE YUCK-YARN FROM MY CREEP-COLLECTION. SO HAVE THE SACRIFICE READY AND I'LL DOPPEL YOUR STOMACH WITH THE TUMMY-TURNER I CALL...

## PEARLY TO DEAD

OUR STORY BEGINS DURING WORLD WAR II, WHEN THE UNITED STATES MARINES WERE SLOWLY AND PAINFULLY INCHING ACROSS THE SOUTH PACIFIC AREA, INVASION AND BATTLES FOR EACH BLOODY STOLL, EACH JAPANESE-INFESTED CORAL ROCK. ONE DAY BLACK STARLESS NIGHT, A SMALL BOAT MOVED SILENTLY TOWARD THE CORAL REEF THAT RINGED THE PEACEFUL LAGOON OF ONE OF THESE JAPANESE-HELD ISLANDS. INSIDE, TWO MEN CROUCHED QUIETLY STUDYING THE DANCING FIRES ON THE SHORE ACROSS THE PLACID LAGOON.

BETTER DROP THE ANCHOR, PHIL. THIS IS ABOUT AS CLOSE IN AS WE DARE GO WITHOUT BEING SEEN.

RIGHT, LARRY.



THE ANCHOR SLID OVER THE SMALL BOAT'S REE AND DROPPED WITH A MUFFLED SPLASH INTO THE BLACK PACIFIC. THEN, STRANGEST, THE TWO MEN BEGAN TO UNDOSS...

WHILE I'M CLEARING THE BRUAL NETTING, YOU START SETTING THE DEMOLITION CHARGES, PHIL. CHECK?



THEY STOOD ALMOST NAKED IN THE PACIFIC NIGHT, MUSCLES RIPPLING. THEY BENT AND SLID THE WORDLY SHAPED BLACK RUBBER FLIPPERS ONTO THEIR FEET...PULLED THEIR RUBBER MASKS WITH THE ROUND GLASS WINDOWS OVER THEIR FACES...



READY? GOT THE CHARGES...TIMERS...FUSES?

RIGHT? GOT YOUR WIRE CLIPPERS...UNDERWATER LAMP...BACK-SART?

SILENTLY, THE TWO MEMBERS OF THE UNITED STATES NAVY'S UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM...THE FABULOUS FROMER...SLID OVER THE SIDE OF THEIR SMALL BOAT AND INTO THE CHOPPY PACIFIC...



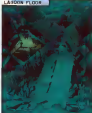
WELL, TAKE IT EASY, PHIL?

SEE YOU IN A WHILE, LARRY!

...AND WENT ABOUT THEIR BUSINESS...THE BUSINESS OF CLEARING THE WAY FOR THE INVASION OF THE FOLLOWING MORNING. THE ONE NAMED LARRY GLIDED DOWNWARD, FLICKING ON HIS LAMP, SEARCHING OUT THE TREASONOUS PROPELLER-SHATTERING STEEL NETTING...



...AS THE OTHER, THE ONE NAMED PHIL, SKIMMED BELOW THE SURFACE TO THE PILING SUNK IN THE LAGOON FLOOR



WITH THE NETTING CLIPPED AND SAVED AND OUT ANY AND FORTHED HARMLESS, LARRY SHOT TOWARDS PHIL TO HELP PLACE THE DEMOLITION CHARGES, HIS LANTERN BEAM RUNNING ACROSS THE SANDY BOTTOM OF THE LAGOON...



AND THEN, SUDDENLY, HE SAW IT...STRETCHING AWAY BELOW HIM IN THE GLOOMY MURKY DARKNESS...THE OYSTER BED...



AS LARRY CIRCLED OVER THE BED, STUDYING THE ABNORMALLY-LARGE SHELLED SEA CREATURES WITH THEIR PRICELESS GLOVED GEMS EMBEDDED IN THEIR GUMMING HEAVY BODIES, PHIL GLIDED TOWARD HIM, STARING WIDE-EYED.



THE TWO MEN SURFACED BESIDE THEIR BOAT, GASPING FOR BREATH...



DID YOU SEE IT, PHIL? THERE, GASP... THERE MUST BE A PORTAGE IN PEARLS IN THAT OYSTER BED! I'M GOING BACK... GASP... DOWN...

DON'T BE A FOOL, LARRY! I'VE SET THE CHARGES. C'MON! LET'S GET OUT OF HERE!

MINUTES LATER, THE SMALL BOAT WAS HUMMING SEAWARD. BEHIND, THE DEMOLITION CHARGES EXPLODED IN THE FLACID LAGOON SIGNALING THE MIGHTY BATTLE BARRAGE OFFSHORE TO BEGIN THEIR BARRAGE. LARRY SCROO ABOVE THE OIL...



WE'LL COME BACK, PHIL! AFTER THIS CRAZY MESS IS OVER, WE'LL COME BACK FOR THOSE PEARLS! WE'LL BE BACK!

SURE, LARRY! SURE!

AT DAWN THE NEXT MORNING, THE ASSAULT BOATS STORMED THE QUIET LAGOON, AND PROPELLERS CHURNED BLOOD INTO THE WATERS ABOVE THE OYSTER BED...



THE BEACHHEAD WAS SECURED. THE DEMOLITION TEAM'S WORK WAS DONE. LARRY AND PHIL WERE SHIPPED ELSEWHERE TO OTHER ISLANDS, WITH OTHER LAGOONS...



THEY SAY THIS ATOM BOMB WROTE OUT A WHOLE CITY, PHIL. MAYBE THE JAPS'LL SURRENDER NOW. THEN...

C'MON! STOP DREAMIN' ABOUT THOSE PEARLS! HOW GET JUST?

V-J DAY! PEACE! IT CAME SUDDENLY... AFTER THE SECOND A-BOMB WAS DROPPED, THE JAPANESE ORDERED AN UNCONDITIONAL SURRENDER AND THE WAR WAS OVER.



HEY, PHIL! SHIFFING ORDERS! WE'RE GOING HOME! WE'RE GETTING OUT!

LET'S GO!

SAN FRANCISCO'S GOLDEN GATE BRIDGE CAME UP OUT OF THE MIST ONE MORNING. THE TROOPSHIP SLIPPED BENEATH IT AND MOVED IN TOWARDS A HARBOR WHERE BARDS PLAYED AND CHILDREN CHEERED AND WOMEN BOOED HAPPILY...



LOOK, PHIL! THERE'S GLADYS!

GLADYS? WHERE?

THEY CAME DOWN THE GANGPLANK TOGETHER, SIDE BY SIDE, LARRY AND PHIL. BUT THE GIRL THAT WAITED WITH TEAR-STAINED CHEEKS HAD EYES FOR ONLY ONE OF THEM.



PHIL, CARLING...

GLADYS SAYS...

HEY, WHEN DOES AN ALIEN GO TO REGISTER?

LARRY TRIED TO HIDE THE JEALOUSY  
ANGER...THE HURT THAT HE FELT.  
GLADY'S PREFERENCE HAD COME AS A  
GREAT SHOCK TO HIM...



I...I WANTED  
TO TELL YOU,  
LARRY! BUT...  
WELL...I...

I UNDERSTAND,  
GLADYS.

PHIL HAD WON AGAIN. IT HAD  
ALWAYS BEEN LIKE THAT. EVER  
SINCE THEIR COLLEGE DAYS.  
THEY'D BOTH COME OUT FOR THE  
SWIM TEAM...



THAT'S GOOD  
TIME, WASN'T IT?  
WHAT DID YOU  
SAY YOUR NAME  
WAS?

LARRY?  
LARRY  
MILES!

LARRY'D DONE HIS BEST, BUT  
PHIL... PHIL HAD DONE JUST A  
LITTLE BIT BETTER.



CONGRATULATIONS,  
BOY! THAT BEATS  
MILES' TIME BY  
EIGHT TENTHS!

THE NAME'S  
PHIL  
CANNON,  
COACH!

LARRY AND PHIL HAD BECOME FAST FRIENDS IN COL-  
LEGE. BUT THERE WAS ALWAYS THAT RIVALRY BETWEEN  
THEM...



COME ON,  
LARRY!

LET'S GO,  
PHIL!

MILES IS GREAT,  
AND CANNON IS  
BETTER. WE'VE  
GOT SOME SWIM  
TEAM THIS YEAR.

NOT ONLY IN THE POOL... BUT ALSO ON THE CAMPUS.



HEY, YOU TWO? I WANT  
YOU TO MEET GLADYS  
HART! GLADYS, MEET  
OUR TWO SWIM CHAMPS,  
LARRY MILES AND PHIL  
CANNON.

VERY NICE!  
ARE YOU  
BOSS  
TODAY?  
MISS  
HART?

SORRY,  
LARRY!  
MISS  
HART  
ALREADY  
HAS A  
DATE WITH  
ME!

WHEN GLADYS HAD COME INTO THEIR LIVES, THE  
RIVALRY BETWEEN THE TWO BOYS HAD INCREASED.  
THEY BOTH FALLER IN LOVE WITH HER.



GLADYS, YOU KNOW HOW I  
FEEL ABOUT YOU? SAY  
YES!... AND I'LL BUY YOU  
THE BIGGEST ENGAGEMENT  
RING IN THE STORE.

LARRY? I... I LIKE  
YOU... BUT... WELL, I  
JUST CAN'T MAKE UP  
MY MIND!

THEN, PEARL HARBOR, AND THE U.S. WAS IN A WAR. THE  
NAVY HAD COME TO LARRY AND PHIL... ASKED THEM  
TO JOIN THE UNDERWATER DEMOLITION TEAM. AND  
THEY'D ACCEPTED...



SO LONG,  
GLADYS!

WRITES!

I WILL!  
GOOD-BYE,  
BOYS! TAKE  
CARE.

AND NOW THEY WERE BACK FROM THE WAR, STANDING ON A JARRED PIER FULL OF RETURNED SAILORS AND SOLDIERS AND HAPPY LOVED ONES, AND PHIL HAD WON A WAR...



WE'RE... WE'RE... FROM PHIL GOING TO BE MARRIED, LARRY! I MEAN... WHAT ABOUT OUR BUSINESS OUT THERE... IN THE PACIFIC?



IT'LL BE A LOVELY PLACE TO TAKE GLAYS ON OUR HOMEWORK, LARRY. OH, SURE! SURE! WELL, CONGRATULATIONS, YOU TWO!

DITCHING! CIVILIAN CLOTHES AGAIN! FREEDOM FROM REGIMENTATION! DISCIPLINE! THEY WERE ALL LARRY'S NOW AND A SECRET, TOO! A MILLION DOLLAR SECRET! JUST ONE THING... ONE THING WENT NOT HIS, YES? GLAYS?



I PICKED UP THESE SURPLUS FLIPPERS AND MARKS, PHIL. I THOUGHT WE'D TRY THEM OUT TONIGHT. LOOK, FELLER! I'M GETTING MARRIED TOMORROW! HAVE A HEART!

LARRY CONVINCED PHIL THAT AFTER HE WAS MARRIED THERE'D BE NO CHANCE TO TRY OUT THEIR EQUIPMENT, AND PHIL RELUCTANTLY AGROED. THEY DROVE OUT TO A LONELY BEACH...



I PICKED THIS SPOT BECAUSE IT'S SO MUCH LIKE THAT LAGDON, PHIL! YEAH! IT... IT IS! WELL! LET'S GO!

LARRY HAD PLANNED IT ALL SO CAREFULLY! WITH PHIL DEAD, GLAYS, THE SECRET OF THE FEAR-BED... EVERYTHING... WOULD BE HIS...



LARRY! WHAT THE ? OH, SURE! SURE! WELL, CONGRATULATIONS, YOU TWO! IT'S GOING TO BE SUCH A PITY, PHIL... A GOOD SWIMMER LIKE YOU IS DROWNING!

THEY STRUGGLED WILGOL, THERE IN THE FOAMING SURF OF THAT LONELY CALIFORNIA BEACH. LARRY HELD PHIL'S THROAT IN A VICE-LIKE GRIP, UNTIL PHIL'S BODY WENT LIMP AND LIFE LEFT IT AND IT SLIPPED FROM LARRY'S GRASP AND SANK BENEATH THE OCEAN WAVES...



AND LARRY CAME OUT OF THE WATER ALONE WITH A GRIM SMILE ON HIS FACE AND THE STORY HE'D TELL GLAYS SO CLEAR IN HIS MIND...



—AND BEFORE I COULD GET TO HIM, HE WENT DOWN FOR GOOD. HE .. HE MUST HAVE GOTTEN A CRAMP. I .. I TRIED TO OVEE FOR HIM, BUT THE UNDERG...

NO!  
NO...  
NO...OM...  
LORD!



I'LL BE BACK IN THREE MONTHS, GLADYS. PERHAPS, BY THEN, YOU WILL HAVE GOTTEN OVER THIS, AND MAYBE I, JOE AND I.



BABY, YOU'RE THE MOST GORGEOUS GOLL ON THIS SHIP!  
T...E...BABY

WELL...SO ON...DON'T JUST LEAVE ME ALONE-



WHAT IS IT, LARRY?

THERE? IN THE WATER!

I... NO! IT CAN'T BE!

I MUST BE SEEING THINGS!



THE SHIP DOCKED AT TAHITI AND LARRY LOST NO TIME IN HIRING A PLANE TO TAKE HIM SOUTH TO THE ATOLL.



CAN YOU LAND THIS CRATE IN A LAGOON?

I CAN DROP IT ON A CORAL MOUNTAIN!

ON THAT FLAME TRIP SOUTH... SWIMMING LOW OVER THE BLUE PACIFIC... WAS LARRY CRAFTY... OR DID HE SEE IT AGAIN... THERE JUST BELOW HIM... THAT ASHER, PUFFY, BLOATED FORM...



STUPID! MISTER CANNOT AIR DROPT

CHUCK, A LITTLE, I GUESS

THE ATOLL CAME UP... A PEARL AGAINST A BLUE BATH SEASIDE... GUARDING ITS OWN PEARL TREASURE. LARRY CANT HIS FEARS FROM HIS MIND WHEN HE SAW IT...



THERE IT IS! LAND IN THAT LAGOON!

RIGHT?

THE TINY SEAPLANE CAME DOWN GENTLY AND BAT BOBBING QUIETLY IN THE BLUE LAGOON AS LARRY UNPACKED HIS GEAR, REMOVED THE FLIPPERS AND THE RUBBER SLASH-WINDOWED MASK, AND BEGAN TO UNDOORS.



HEFF! WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU GONNA DIVE FOR SOMETHING?

YEP! THERE'S AN OYSTER BED IN THIS LAGOON... WITH PEARLS THE SIZE OF YOUR FIST AND I'M GOING TO GET ME A FEW...

TINY FISH SCATTERED BEFORE HIM AS LARRY SHOT DOWNWARD. HE PASSED THE OLD RUSTED NETTINGS... THE SUNKEN ASSAULT BOATS... THE WATER-LOGGED BLASTED FILINGS... AND THEN HE SAW IT... THE OYSTER BED. HE SWAM TOWARD IT... FASERIK...



LARRY WAS SO BUSY WRENCHING THE LARGEST OYSTER HE COULD FIND FROM THE SANDY BOTTOM THAT HE NEVER NOTICED THE PUTRID, SLIME, WHITE FORM DRIFT TOWARD HIM, AND WHEN ITS BLOATED ARMS CLOSED AROUND HIS NECK, AND THE ROTTED FACE GRINNED AT HIM, IT WAS TOO LATE...



POW... GORE... SLIME...

HEH, HEH! YEP, KIDDER! THAT'S MY YARN. THE *PROT* OF THE SEAPLANE WAITED AROUND FOR LARRY TO COME UP FOR *SEVERAL HOURS*. FINALLY, HE WHUNGED, WENT THROUGH LARRY'S PANTS, EXTRACTED THE MONEY FROM HIS WALLET, TORBESD THE REST OF LARRY'S GEAR INTO THE LAGOON, AND *TOOK OFF* AND YOU'LL TAKE OFF WHEN YOU READ THE *NEXT* *BAULT-KEEPER YARN!* HEH... HEH! NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO *GR!* I'LL SEE YOU *NEXT* IN MY MAG, THE *VAULT OF HORROR!* 'WFF! E.G., THAT IS!



HERE'S A BUBBLY LITTLE TALE OF  
TITANIC TERROR! I CALL IT...

# PRAIRIE SCHOONER



MILDRED JACKSON FLUNG OPEN THE DOOR OF HER HOUSE AND BOHEALED WITH JOY. HE STOOD ON THE FLINT-STARVED FRONT PORCH, DRESSED RESPLENDENTLY IN HIS CAPTAIN'S UNIFORM, HIS FACE BRONZED FROM FORTY YEARS AT SEA, HIS EYES COLD AND SCOURING, HIS MOUTH GRIN, HIS TWO SUIT CASES BESIDE HIM...

"EERA! EERA! WHY DIDN'T YOU WRITE ME YOU WERE COMING TO VISIT?" OH, EERA... IT'S SO GOOD TO SEE YOU AGAIN.

"HELLO, MILLY. GOT A PLACE FOR YER OLD SEA DOG BROTHER TO BUNK DOWN FOR A SPELL?"



MILLY LED EERA INTO THE PARLOR...

"THERE'S ALWAYS ROOM FOR YOU HERE, EERA. YOU KNOW THAT. HOW LONG WILL YOU STAY?"

"JUST A SPELL, MILLY. JUST TILL I DECIDE WHAT I'M GONNA DO NEXT. Y'SEE... THEY TOOK AWAY MY SHIP. THEY RETIRED ME."



"RETIRED... OH, EERA, I'M SO BORING."

"YER, MY DAYLIN' DAYS ARE OVER, MILLY. I'M A LAND-LUBBER, NOW. WELL, WHERE DO I STOW MY BEART?"





THAT WAS HOW EZRA JACKSON CAME TO LIVE WITH HIS SISTER MILLY. AT FIRST, MILLY WAS VERY HAPPY TO HAVE HIM. AFTER ALL, SHE WAS AN OLD MAID... AND EZRA WAS COMPANY. BUT AS TIME WENT ON, EZRA BEGAN TO DO STRANGE THINGS.



EZRA? WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT THROUGH YOUR SPY-GLASS?

HOW?

ONE NIGHT, MILLY WAS ROUSED OUT OF A SOUND SLEEP BY HEAVY PAINS SHAKING HER ROUGHLY...



WHY... WHAT'S WRONG? EZRA? WHAT IS IT?

GET UP, YOU LAZY SWINE. YOU'RE LATE FOR YOUR WATCH, AND IF YOU EVER DO THIS AGAIN, I'LL HAVE YOU THROWN IN THE SEA!

IT WAS OBVIOUS TO POOR MILLY THAT HER OLDER BROTHER WAS ILL... MENTALLY ILL. THE SHOCK OF BEING RETIRED HAD BEEN TOO MUCH FOR HIM. HIS MIND HAD SHATTERED. HE FANDED HIMSELF AT SEA AGAIN... THE HOUSE, HIS SHIP, AND SHE, HIS CARE...



YOU CALL THIS CLEAN? I WANT THIS DECK SCRUBBED TILL I CAN SEE MY REFLECTION! UNDERSTAND?

YES, EZRA!



I SAID WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING AT WITH YOUR SPY-GLASS?

NOTHING, MILLY! I WAS JUST WATCHING THAT SHIP ON THE HORIZON!



SHIP? BUT EZRA! THIS IS KANSAS! THERE AREN'T ANY SHIPS ON THE HORIZON. THERE ISN'T ANY WATER... FOR HUNDREDS OF MILES!

FROM THAT NIGHT ON, MILLY WAS FORCED TO "STAND WATCH" SHE HAD TO MOVE THROUGH THE HALLS OF THE OLD HOUSE FROM TWO A.M. TO DAWN, CARRYING A LANTERN AND SHOUTING



LOUDER, YOU BLITHERING IDIOT! LOUDER!

EVENT BELLS AND ALL'S BELL!



DON'T "EZRA" ME! IT'S "YES, CAPTAIN JACKSON!" REMEMBER THAT! NOW, GET TO WORK, YOU BLAZE RAT!

Y-YES, CAPTAIN JACKSON.

MILLY HAD BEEN A SCHOOL TEACHER IN HER YOUNGER YEARS. SHE'D WORKED HARD AND MANAGED TO SAVE A SMALL AMOUNT OF MONEY. SHE'D USED PART OF IT TO BUY THE HOUSE SHE NOW LIVES IN. THE REST, SHE'D INVESTED WISELY, AND SHE'D BEEN ABLE TO LIVE COMFORTABLY. BUT WITH EDNA'S ARRIVAL, HER MEAGER INCOME WAS NOT ENOUGH...



SO MILLY WAS FORCED TO EARN EXTRA MONEY TO AMMERTY THE SMALL INCOME SHE DERIVED FROM HER INVESTMENTS. SHE HAD TO TAKE IN WASHING...



EDNA STOOD IN THE CENTER OF THE GELLAR FLOOR, STARING ABOUT HIM WITH WIDE BLEAMING EYES...



EDNA CAME DOWN THE CELLAR STAIRS, SCREAMING...



MILLY WAS HELPLESS. SHE HAD NO OTHER CHOICE... EXCEPT, PERHAPS, TO HAVE EDNA PUT AWAY. SO SHE CALLED IN A CARPENTER... A PLUMBER...



EIRA STORMED ABOUT IN THE CELLAR, SHOUTING OUT HIS ORDERS...

RIP OUT THOSE WINDOWS, CLOSE 'EM UP, PUT UP FALSE WALLS. MANDARIN PANELED WALLS, NOT IN PORT HOLES. REAL PORT HOLES—THAT OPEN!

YES, MR. JACKSON

CAPTAIN JACKSON? PUT OCEAN SCENES BEHIND THE PORT HOLES. HANG SHIP'S LANTERNS AROUND. PUT IN A BUMP A GALLEY AHEAD MAKE EVERYTHING AUTHENTIC. THIS IS MY SHIP!

YES, CAPTAIN!



AND POOR MILLY WITHDREW HER LIFE'S SAVINGS FROM HER INVESTMENTS TO PAY FOR THE NONSENSE.

4,500... 3,000 DOLLARS. WHERE YOU ARE, MR. SUMNER?

FRANK YOU, MA'AM. I HOPE YOUR BROTHER IS HAPPY WITH THE JOB WE DID!



"BELOW" IN HIS SHIP'S QUARTERS, CAPTAIN JACKSON BELLOWED...

STAND BY TO CAST OFF, ENGINE ROOM, FULL SPEED ASTERN, ALL HANDS, MAY YOUR STATIONS... ON THE DOUBLE...



MILLY CAME "BELOW" CARRYING HER LAUNDRY BASKET FILLED WITH THE WASH SHE'D BEEN TAKING IN...

WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU COMING DOWN HERE WITH THAT?

I'VE GOT TO DO THE SHIP'S LAUNDRY, CAPTAIN. I'VE...



EIRA STRUCK OUT SAVAGELY...

YOU'LL DO THE LAUNDRY ON DECK, YOU SCALLION BEGGAR. GET OUT OF MY QUARTERS...

OWWWW!



WITH HER INVESTMENTS WIPED OUT AND THE INCOME FROM THEM GONE, MILLY HAD TO TAKE IN MORE WASH THAN SHE COULD HANDLE IN ORDER TO MEET EXPENSES. AND EZRA'S ABUSE BECAME WORSE AND WORSE...

"SCURVE OUT THAT HEAD YOU FO'G SLE DRUDGE!"

"Y-YES, CAPTAIN!"

POOR MILLY WOULD ESCAPE, EVERY CHANCE SHE COULD GET, AND LOCK HERSELF IN THE UPSTAIRS BATHROOM IN ORDER TO DO THE WASH IN THE TUB... AND AS SHE SCRUBBED, SHE WOULD LISTEN TO EZRA'S RANTING AND RAVING...

"EASE THE HELM! GIVE 'ER MORE RUDDER! STEADY AS YOU GO! HARD APOFT! STEADY! STEADY GO!"

"SOO... JOO..."



ONE HOT SUMMER'S DAY, EZRA STOOD AT THE OPEN PORT HOLE, SHOUTING OUT AT THE SEA-SCAPE SCENE BEYOND...



"ANDY? ANDY THERE? SHIP ANDY? HOLD FAST... STAND BY!"

WHILE UPSTAIRS, DIRECTLY OVER-HEAD IN THE BATHROOM, MILLY PANTED OVER A LOAD OF WASH...



THE HOT WATER, RUNNING INTO THE TUB OVER THE SOAKING CLOTHES, SENT UP CLOUDS OF STEAM WHICH FILLED THE LOCKED BATHROOM.



SUDDENLY MILLY CLUTCHED AT THE EXCRUCIATING PAIN IN HER CHEST, TOPPLING OVER...



AND AS HER HEART FAILED AND HER LIFE FADED WITH IT, THE BOILING WATER OVERFLOWED THE TUB, POOLING ABOUT HER PROSTRATE BODY, SINKING THROUGH THE BATHROOM FLOOR...



IN HIS CELLAR SHIP'S QUARTERS, CAPTAIN JACKSON LISTEN AS THE WATER, LEAKING DOWN FROM THE OVERFLOWING BATHING ABOVE, FILLED THE SPACE BETWEEN THE FALSE MAHOGANY PANELED WALLS AND THE FOUNDATION OF THE HOUSE.



THE CELLAR FILLED WITH STEAM. CAPTAIN JACKSON STAGGERED TO THE PORT HOLES, BLANNNED THEM SHUT. THE PRESSURE OF THE WATER CRUMBBLED THE PANELED WALLS...



...UNTIL THE BURNING HOT WATER REACHED HIS CHIN...HIS NECK...POURED INTO HIS MOUTH AND STENDED HIS TONGUE...HIS THROAT...HIS LUNGS...



SUDDENLY, THE WATER BEGAN TO POUR THROUGH THE OPEN PORT HOLES...



SLOWLY THE WATER ROSE IN THE CELLAR, BOILING, SCALDING, BLISTERING EZZA'S ASED BODY, BUT HE STUBORNLY STOOD FAST...



HEE, HEE! YEP, KIDDIES THAT'S MY MORRID MARINE OFFERING. EZZA FINALLY ENDED UP... IN HOT WATER! THIS IS THE FIRST CASE ON RECORD BY THE WAY, OF A CAPTAIN GOING DOWN WITH HIS SHIP IN THE MIDDLE OF A KANSAS PRAIRIE... IN A CELLAR AND NOW, I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE OLD WITCH, WHO IS WAITING TO WIND UP MY PEE- KAS! REMEMBER! IF YOU'RE A FAN... AND AN ADDICT... YOU'RE AN... E.E. FAN-ADDICT! WHEN 'TYS, NOW!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEH! AND NOW, IT'S MORBID-MEAL-TIME. WELCOME TO THE HAUNT OF FEAR, CREEPS. THIS IS YOUR REVOLTING RESTAURATEUR, THE OLD WITCH, READY TO SLING SLIME...AND WIND UP C.E.'S MUCK-MAW FOR THIS SCOTTIE ISSUE. CARE FOR SOME SEA FOOD? WELL, HERE'S A TASTY TERROR TID-BIT TO TURN YOUR STOMACH. I CALL THIS SLOP-SERVING...

## HALF-BAKED!

CAULIN DUGAN STOOD IN THE SPOTLESS KITCHEN OF 'THE SEA SHELL RESTAURANT' STARRING IN MORBID FASCINATION AT THE SCURMING, SLUG-GREEN, SPINER-LEGGED CLAWED CREATURE THAT SCRATCHED GRILLY AROUND AT THE BOTTOM OF THE BUTTER TUB. CAUTIOUSLY, HE REACHED IN AND PULLED ONE OF THEM FROM THE TUB, HOLDING IT UP. HE LAUGHED BRUTALLY.

"YOU'RE HEFF, YOU DISGUSTING THING. NOW, NOW! DON'T STRUGGLE! IT'S NO USE! HEH, HEH!"



CAULIN REACHED FOR A KNIFE. HE PLACED THE STRUGGLING LOBSTER, BELLY UP ON THE HUGE WOODEN KITCHEN TABLE AND GRINNED DOWN AT IT.

"FIRST, WE SPLIT YOU OPEN... FROM HEAD TO TAIL... LIKE SO..."



THE LOBSTER SQUIRMED. CALVIN FORCED THE KNIFE BLADE AGAINST ITS SOFT-SHELLED UNDERSIDE AND, WITH A SLIGHT SAWING MOTION, CRUNCHED IT THROUGH THE LOBSTER, NOW PRACTICALLY SEVERED IN HALF. STILL WRIGGLING ITS SPINY LEGS AND WAVED ITS HUGE CLAWS AWARDARDY.



HEH, HEH. NOW I WISH THAT I HAD SOME SENSITIVE INSTRUMENT SO THAT I COULD HEAR YOUR BLOOD-SOURLINE SARIERS, LITTLE UGLY MONSTER

CALVIN MOVED THE THRASHING SPLIT LOBSTER ONTO A PLATE AND SLID IT INTO THE STOVE, BELOW THE LICKING BLUE FLAMES OF THE BURNER.



AND NOW, WE BROLL FOR ALIVE WE LISTEN TO YOU HISS AND POP UNTIL YOU TURN ORANGE-RED AND YOU STOP YOUR SQUAWKING

CALVIN STARED INTO THE STOVE AT THE BROLLING LOBSTER. HIS EYES GLINTED ALMOST MANICALLY AS HE WATCHED ITS STRUGGLING AWAFFE



DEAD, ALREADY, BLAST IT!

CALVIN GRINNED... I MUST LOWER THE FLAME SO THAT THE HEAT ONE WILL DIE SLOWER!



BEHIND CALVIN, THE SEA-SHELL RESTAURANT'S CHIEF SHOOK HIS HEAD AS HE WATCHED HIS EMPLOYEE



WHY DO YOU TAKE SUCH SADISTIC DELIGHT IN KILLING THOSE POOR LOBSTERS, MR. DUGAN?

I HATE THEM, JOHN!

CALVIN'S FACE GROW GRIM AS HE TURNED TO HIS CHIEF...



I HATE UGLY AND HORRIBLE CREATURES! HORRIBLE CREATURES SHOULD DIE HORRIBLY!

A LOBSTER IS A LIVING THING, MR. DUGAN. NO LIVING THING SHOULD BE MADE TO SUFFER

A LOBSTER IS HIDEOUS... UNLIT IT DESERVES TO SUFFER, JOHN. ITS OWN HIDEOUSNESS MERITS AN UGLY DEATH...



PERHAPS... TO A LOBSTER... IT IS YOU WHO ARE UGLY, MR. DUGAN!

MEANWHILE, AT THAT VERY MOMENT, A FEW MILES UP THE BEACONST FROM THE SEA SHELL RESTAURANT, A FISHERMAN GUIDES HIS INBOARD OVER THE TROUBLED OCEAN SWEDS TO A CORK FLOAT FROM WHICH FLEW A TATTERED FLAG.



THE FISHERMAN PULLED UP BESIDE THE BOBBING MARKER AND PULLED IT INTO HIS SEA SKIFF, SLOWLY, TEDIIOUSLY, HE HAULED IN THE DRIPPING LINE, THAT WAS FASTENED TO THE CORK FLOAT...



FINALLY, THE LOBSTER TRAP SURFACED, AND THE FOUL SCENT OF THE FISH HEAD, PLACED WITHIN IT AS BAIT, REARED THE FISHERMAN'S NOSETHILLS...



SADLY, THE FISHERMAN GUIDED HIS INBOARD BACK TO THE BEACH WHERE A WOMAN AND CHILD STOOD IN THE DOORWAY OF A WIND-SCARRED SHACK, WAITING.



THE FISHERMAN ENTERED HIS DINKY SHACK AND SAT DOWN WEARILY...

THE CHILD BEGAN TO CRY.





THE SEA SNAIL RESTAURANT WAS NOTED FOR ITS BROILED LOBSTER. PEOPLE CAME FROM MILES AROUND TO FEAST ON THE SACCULANT WHITE MEAT DIPPED IN BUTTER SAUCE. CALVIN DUGAN DID A THRIVING BUSINESS.

THE LOBSTER WAS ESPECIALLY TASTY TODAY, MR. DUGAN. THANK YOU. MR. HINES GOOD EVENING COME AGAIN.



JOHN HEDGES AND LEFT. CALVIN LISTENED AS THE CAR MOTOR ECHOED AWAY INTO THE NIGHT, THEN TURNED TO THE ALMOST EMPTY TUB...



HEDEOUS, DISGUSTING CREATURES!

AFTER A WHILE, CALVIN LEFT THE RESTAURANT. HE LOOKED UP CAREFULLY, BUT HE DID NOT GET INTO HIS CAR. INSTEAD, HE WALKED DOWN TO THE BEACH...



BLAST IT! THERE'S A MOON OUT TONIGHT WELL, I'LL HAVE TO CHANGE IT.

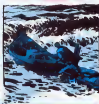
AFTER CLOSING TIME THAT NIGHT, JOHN, THE CHEF, REMINDED CALVIN...



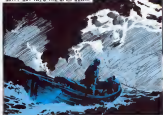
WE'RE GETTING LOW ON LOBSTERS, MR. DUGAN. IF WE HAVE A GOOD CROWD TOMORROW, WE'LL RUN OUT!

I'LL PICK SOME UP IN THE MORNING ON THE WAY IN! GOOD-NIGHT, JOHN.

HE MOVED DOWN THE BEACH TO WHERE A SEA SKIFF WAS MOORED. UNTYING IT, CALVIN PUSHED THE CRAFT INTO THE ONCOMING BREAKERS.



THE INBOARD MOTOR COUGHED AND SPUTTERED, THEN BEGAN TO HUM EVENLY. CALVIN GUIDED THE SKIFF OUT INTO THE OPEN SEA...



A FEW MILES OUT HE PULLED UP BESIDE A ROBBING MARKER FROM WHICH A TATTERED FLAG FLAPPED.



AMBROSE, THE LOBSTER FISHERMAN, FACED THE FLOOR OF HIS DINNY SHACK. LUCK, HIS WIFE, WATCHED HIM WITH SAD EYES.



COME TO BED, AMBROSE. YOU MUST GET UP EARLY.

I AM NOT SLEEPING. I AM THINKING ABOUT MY LOBSTER POTS.

AMBROSE STOPPED PACING. HE LISTENED. FAR AWAY, OVER THE ROAR OF THE SURF POUNDING THE NEARBY BEACH, AMBROSE HEARD A SOUND... A DULL HAMMING SOUND.



A SEA SKIFF. OUT THERE IN THE MOONLIGHT. IS THAT'S IT?

WHAT IS IT, AMBROSE?

AMBROSE POINTED OUT TO SEA. OUT TO THE DISTANT TOSSED SWELLS.



SOMEONE'S OUT THERE. THAT'S WHY MY LOBSTER POTS ARE ALWAYS EMPTY. SOMEONE IS STEALING MY LOBSTERS.

AMBROSE WAIT!

AMBROSE WAS OUT OF THE DOOR OF HIS WEATHER BEATEN SHACK IN A FLASH.



AMBROSE! COME BACK!

I'LL GET HIM, LUCK! I'LL GET HIM!

FAR OUT ON THE MOONLIT WAVES, CALVIN OGDEN LIFTED A LOBSTER POT INTO HIS SEA SKIFF.



TWO BEAUTIES! THAT'S SEVENTEEN ALREADY. AND I'VE ONLY RAISED HALF OF HIS TRAP.

SUDDENLY CALVIN LOOKED UP. SCARCELY ONE HUNDRED YARDS AWAY, ANOTHER SEA SKIFF GLIDED TOWARD HIM SILENTLY.



IT'S THE LOBSTER FISHERMAN. HE MUST HAVE MOVED OUT. THAT'S WHY I DIDN'T HEAR HIM! I'VE GOT TO GET OUT OF HERE!

CALVIN STRUGGLED WITH HIS HERRING, TRYING TO START IT. THE OTHER SEA SKIFF PULLED ALONGSIDE, THE FISHERMAN IN IT LANDED AT HIM WITH BURNING EYES.



SO? NO WONDER MR. OGDEN HADN'T BOTHERED TO STOP BY LATELY TO SEE IF I HAVE ANY LOBSTERS TO SELL. HE KNEW!

KEEP AWAY! AMBROSE! KEEP AWAY! I HATE YOU!

AMERBROE SMARLED...



**YOU BELY THIEF!**  
**YOU MISERABLE MONSTER!**  
MY CHILD HAS GONE  
WITHOUT MYER AND  
MEAT AND CLOTHES  
BECAUSE OF YOU!

**I'LL PAY**  
**YOU,**  
**AMERBROE!**  
**I'LL PAY**

AMERBROE SCREAMED...



**PAY ME!! NEVER!**  
I'M GOING TO **REPORT**  
YOU TO THE **POLICE.**  
**THEY'LL** THROW  
YOU IN **JAIL,** WHERE  
YOU **BELONG!**

**DON'T BE**  
**A FOOL,**  
**AMERBROE!**  
**I'LL PAY**  
**YOU WELL**  
**TO FORGET**  
**THIS!**



**NO! I WON'T TAKE**  
**YOUR MONEY! IT'S**  
**JAIL FOR YOU... JAIL...**

**YOU**  
**FORCE**  
**ME TO DO**  
**THIS,**  
**AMERBROE!**

THE KNIFE BLADE IN CALVIN OUSEN'S HAND  
GLINTED IN THE MOONLIGHT...



**NOW, I'LL HAVE TO KILL YOU,**  
**AMERBROE... TO KEEP YOU**  
**FROM TALKING...**

AMERBROE'S SHIRTS EDGED ACROSS THE HEAVING WATER  
AS CALVIN PLUNGED THE KNIFE INTO HIS WHITING BODY  
AGAIN AND AGAIN...



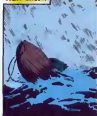
THEN, CALVIN LASHED AMERBROE INTO HIS SEA SKIFF...



...AND CHOPPED A HOLE IN THE FLOORBOARDS, LETTING  
THE SEA WATER IN.



SLOWLY, THE BOAT, WITH ANDROS'S BODY, SANK BOLDLY THE TOSSEING OCEAN WAVES...



CALVIN STARTED HIS ENVOYED AND GUIDED HIS SEA-SKEPP BACK TO THE BEACH...



...AND LOADED THE BUTTERTUB WITH THE STOLEN LOBSTERS INTO HIS CAR TRUNK...



HE'D STARTED HOME...ROARING DOWN THE COAST ROAD AT BREAKNECK SPEED...WHEN THE BLOW-OUT OCCURRED.



AS CALVIN'S LURCHING CAR SPUN OVER, THE STEERING WHEEL SHATTERED, RIPPING INTO HIS BODY...TEARING SLASHING...



HE LAY THERE, PINNED, SCOURGING, HIS BODY ALMOST SPLIT IN TWO, AS THE OVERTURNED CAR CAUGHT FIRE AND THE FLAMES LICKED AT HIM AND HE SCREAMED AND BURNED AND WAS BURNED ALIVE...



HEE, HEE! THAT'S MY STORY, KIDDER! CALVIN ENDED UP LIKE THE LOBSTERS HE'S BEEN STEALING. WHEN I CAME UPON HIS BURNING CAR, HE WAS JUST ABOUT DONE. I WAS SO MAD THERE WASN'T A DROP OF BUTTER SAUCE AROUND! AND TALKING ABOUT SAUCE, YOU'D BETTER HURRY UP AND JOIN US E.G. FAN-ADDICTS! BUT REMEMBER, MEMBERSHIP IS LIMITED TO 150,000,000 PEOPLE. SO DON'T LOSE OUT! GET BACK ISSUES OF OUR PERVERTED PERIODICALS



AND WRITE TO THE CREEP-KEEPER AND LET HIM KNOW WHAT YOU THINK OF OUR BOOK. FOR DETAILS, READ C.K.'S COLUMN!



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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH... AND HEH? (JUST TO BE DIFFERENT.) CRAWL INTO THE DREEPY OLD GRUDDY CRYPT OF TERROR, FRIENDS. THIS IS YOUR GHOSTLY HOST, LE CRYPT-KEEPER... YOUR MASTER OF CEMETERIES... READY TO THRILL YOU, CRAWL YOU, AND KILL YOU WITH A SLIMY SELECTION FROM MY FRENCHISH FILE OF POUL FANCIOS. READY? WELL, HE'RE GOES WITH THE POW! PARN I CALL...

## OPERATION FRIENDSHIP



SMILING WARMLY, DOCTOR ANDREW HOBART SETTLED HIMSELF IN HIS FAVORITE CHAIR. A SIGH OF DEEP CONTENTMENT CAME FORTH AS HE FILLED HIS PIPE, LIT A DANCING FLAME, AND PUFFED BLUE SPIRALS TOWARD THE CEILING. IT WAS A RITUAL HE'D OBSERVED FOR LONG YEARS NOW... UNCOUNTED EVENINGS' WITH HIS FRIENDS. TURNING SLOWLY, THE DOCTOR OPENED THE CONVERSATION...

COMFORTABLE, PHILIP? HOW LET'S RELAX AND ENJOY OUR GNESS GAME... JUST YOU AND I... AS WE'VE DONE THERE PART TWENTY-ODD YEARS. AMH... THESE *QUET EVENINGS* TOGETHER, PHILIP, THEY'RE ALL WE HAVE LEFT...

DOCTOR ROBERT PLACED THE CHESSBOARD ON THE LOW TABLE BEFORE HIM...

OTHERS WANT SCOFF, PHIL, BUT I SAY OURS IS ONE OF LIFE'S RARITIES... A PERFECT FRIENDSHIP... A BOND OF THE MIND... A MENTAL MATING FAR MORE LASTING AND REWARDING THAN THAT OF MAN AND WIFE.



THE OLD DOCTOR WENT ON EAR-RUDELUSLY, ALWAYS THE MORE TALKATIVE OF THE TWO, HARDLY GIVING THE OTHER A CHANCE TO SPEAK. HIS VOICE DRIPPED ON... RICH WITH BELLOW MEMORIES... NOSTALGIC REMINISCENCE...



YES, PHILIP! TWENTY YEARS OF THIS! REMEMBER NOW IT ALL BEARS, PHILIP! NOW, AS KIDS, OUR FAMILIES MOVED NEXT DOOR TO EACH OTHER! REMEMBER?

'REMEMBER NOW, LIKE ALL KIDS, WE WERE SHY AT FIRST, BUT QUICKLY WARMED UP... FOUND THAT WE LIKED THE SAME THINGS.'

BOOH, AND? I LIKE YOU.

I LIKE YOU TOO, PHIL. LET'S BE PALS FOR LIFE... AND SEAL IT IN BLOOD...



'A KID'S PUNKY NO. IT WAS MORE THAN THAT, PHIL! IT WAS A PACT OF DEVOTION THAT NOTHING HAS BEEN ABLE TO TEAR ASART IN ALL THESE YEARS! NOTHING!'

GIVE YOUR NAME, PHIL. WE'LL BE BUNDLES FOREVER...

TILL WE'RE OLD MEN AND READY TO DIE ANDY...



'REMEMBER, PHIL? REMEMBER HOW INSEPARABLE WE WERE... PLAYING TOGETHER... SOME PLACES TOGETHER, FIGHTING TOGETHER... TWO OF US AGAINST THE WORLD.'

YOU ARE BULLY! DON'T EVER POKE ON MY PAL PHIL AGAIN, O'YHEART?

DEAF! DEAF! I SWE UP! I PROMISE! OHHH...

NOH... NOH...



'REMEMBER, PHILIP? WE WERE A MODERN JAMBO AND PYTHIAS, AND AS WE GREW OUT OF BOYHOOD, WE BECAME EVEN CLOSER, IF ANYTHING. REMEMBER, IN HIGH SCHOOL, HOW EVEN THE PRETTIEST GIRLS FAILED TO PULL US APART?...

SORRY JOAN! PHIL AND I ARE GOING TO THE MOVIES OURSELVES TONIGHT... TOGETHER!

I WON'T ASK YOU AGAIN, ANDREW ROBERT! YOU'RE... YOU'RE NOT HUMAN!



'NONE OF THE GIRLS UNDERSTOOD, PHIL. THEY COULDN'T THEIR CHEAP THRILLS OF DATING AND PETTING WERE AS CANNIBAL TO THE PLAYING ECSTASY OF OUR EMBRACING MINDS.'

I'VE DECIDED ON MEDICINE, PHIL! WHY DON'T YOU STUDY IT WITH ME?

SORRY ABOUT ELECTRONICS IS MY HEAT!



"COLLECTED THE SAME COLLEGE, OF COURSE, NATURALLY, WE COULD NOT BE EXACTLY ALIKE IN ALL THINGS. I PROMISED LIVING MECHANISMS AND YOU PROMISED COLD LIFELESS ONES. BUT EVEN HERE, WE FOUND COMMON GROUND."

"IT'S A WELL KNOWN FACT THAT THE BRAIN EMITS ELECTRIC IMPULSES, PHIL. WHY DO YOU ASK?"

"I WAS JUST WONDERING, ANDY. SUPPOSE WE COULD CAPTURE THOSE IMPULSES AND REPRODUCE THEM INTO AUDIBLE BOUNDS... ELECTRONICALLY."

"REMEMBER HOW WE WORKED TOGETHER ON YOUR THEORY, PHIL? THE CRAZY MACHINE WE BUILT. REMEMBER THAT SOUND... HOW WE KEPT IT ALIVE IN THE BRINE WATER... ATTACHING THE ELECTRODES TO ITS HEAD?"

"LISTEN, ANDY! LISTEN!"

"EAWWWW! WEEEEEK!"

"WORKS, PHIL! IT WORKS!"

"WE USED THOSE CLEVER SACRIFICE FOR OUR COMBINED DOCTORATE THESIS. WE KNOCKED 'EM DEAD, DIDN'T WE PHIL... GRADUATED WITH TOP HONORS."

"CONGRATULATIONS, ANDY!"

"SAME TO YOU, PHIL!"

"AND WENT OUT INTO THE WORLD TOGETHER. REMEMBER HOW WE FOUND THOSE TWO OFFICE SIDES BY SIDE? I HUNG OUT MY A.D. SHINGLE AND YOU HUNG OUT YOUR ELECTRONIC ENGINEER'S SIGN..."

"READY FOR LUNCH, PHIL?"

"LET'S GO..."

"DOCTOR ANDREW HOBART STUDIED THE CHESSBOARD BEFORE HIM AS IF HE WERE CONTEMPLATING THE MOVE HE'D HAD IN MIND WHEN THEY'D LEFT OFF THE PREVIOUS NIGHT..."

"WE BOTH MADE OUR MARKS, PHIL! YOU IN ELECTRONIC PATENTS... I IN SURGERY. AND ALWAYS, FROM THOSE FIRST YEARS, LIKE NOW, WE SPENT EVERY EVENING TOGETHER, OUR FRIENDSHIP CEMENTING ITSELF FIRMER EACH YEAR. REMEMBER?"

"AND THEN CAME THOSE AWFUL WEEKS. I STILL SHUDDER AT THE MEMORY, PHILIP. I KNEW SOMETHING WAS WRONG. I FELT IT EVERY EVENING YOU CAME MORE AND MORE MOODY..."

"I CAN'T MAKE IT TOMORROW NIGHT, ANDY! SOMETHING CAME UP!"

"SURE, PHIL! I UNDERSTAND."

"YOU STOPPED COMING. FIRST YOU SKIPPED ONE DAY A WEEK, THEN TWO. THEN YOU HARDLY CAME AT ALL. I HAD TO KNOW WHY..."

"WHAT'S WRONG, PHIL? I CAN FEEL SOMETHING STRANDING BETWEEN US? WHAT IS IT? TELL ME! I MUST KNOW!"

"HOW CAN I TELL YOU, ANDY? I... IT ISN'T EASY!"

YOUR HESITATION, YOUR AVERTED EYES, A COLD CHILL, SHIPPED ME AND I STEELED MYSELF FOR THE SHOCK OF WHAT I COULD ALMOST SUSSE.

Oh... I'm in LOVE, AMOI!

No, Phil...

YOU WENT ON, NOT KNOWING HOW EACH WORD WHIP, ASKED MY FLINCHING SOUL...

HER NAME IS JONORA! HERE, HERE'S HER PICTURE! DIDN'T SHE PRETTY?

Very... lovely, Phil!

I'M GOING TO MARRY HER, ANDY!

MARRY? BUT PHIL! OUR... OUR FRIENDSHIP... AFTER ALL THESE YEARS... YOU'LL BE BREAKING IT UP...

PLEASE, ANDY, DON'T MAKE ME FEEL LIKE A DOG! AFTER ALL... I AM SETTING ALONE IN YEARS! I'M ALMOST THIRTY! IT'S HORRIBLE FOR A MAN MY AGE TO WANT A WIFE... A HOME... ~~XXXX~~ AND OUR FRIENDSHIP ISN'T BREAKING UP, YOU'LL LIKE JONORA, AND...

NO, PHIL! IT WON'T BE THE SAME WITH YOU MARRIED! YOU CAN'T DO IT! LISTEN TO ME

"REMEMBER HOW I PLEADED WITH YOU, PHILIP! ANNOYED... NAYED... STORMED... BROVELED ON BENDED KNEES..."

PHIL, YOU CAN'T CAST ASIDE OUR FRIENDSHIP LIKE AN OLD SHOE, IT'S TOO SACRED! MARRIAGE IS FOR OTHERS, NOT FOR US, WITH OUR WEDDED BOND! PHIL, I SEE IN YOU... GIVE THIS CREATURE UP!

I'M... SORRY, ANDY...

YOU TURNED A STONEY HEART TO YOUR OLD FRIEND, PHILIP, AND THEN, ONE DAY, YOU BROUGHT JONORA TO MEET ME. SHE WAS LOVELY, ALL RIGHT, ON THE OUT-SIDE! BUT A MENTAL MONSTER WITHIN...

THIS IS ANDREW HOBART, JONORA!

SEE, PHILLY'S TOL' ME ALL ABOUT! FUN, DOO, HE SAYS YOU'RE REAL SMART.

YOUR FIANCEE EXAMBER- AFTER, JONORA! IT IS PHILIP WHO IS THE SMARTER OF THE TWO OF US!

PHILLY? SMART? AN, S'WONT HE'S BIG AN HAND-SOME AN... AND HE CAN PLAY A MEAN GAME OF TENNIS, BUT SMART? REALLY? YER KIDDIN'! PHILLY? YOU SMART!

"AFTER YOU AND JONRA LEFT, I  
CARED PHILIP, NO, NOT FOR ME AND  
MY LONELINESS... BUT FOR YOU."

"BOW... THAT GIRL? THAT... JOB...  
FEELING! ALL SHE WANTS OF HIM  
IS A PLAYMATE AND A LOVER...  
NO PHYSICAL ATTRIBUTES...  
WHILE HIS FINE MIND GOES TO  
WASTE!"



"WEDDING BELLS TOLLED HAPPY-  
NESS FOR YOU, PHILIP... JEREMY  
FOR ME. I WAS YOUR BEST MAN,  
OF COURSE, BUT NO LONGER YOUR  
BEST FRIEND... CLOSEST COM-  
PANION..."

"I'LL LOVE  
ANYONE!"

"BYE,  
GO-GE!  
SEE  
YUH."

"GOOD-BYE,  
PHIL...  
CHORE..."



"AND THEN I SAT ALONE, PHILIP.  
EVENING AFTER EVENING... LISTENING  
TO THAT ANGUISH SILENCE... STARRING AT  
YOUR EMPTY CHAIR..."

"PHIL! COME BACK TO  
ME. SOB... SOB... PHIL..."



"THOSE BITTER LONELY HOURS, PHILIP... DRAGGING  
ME... EACH AN ETERNITY... UNTIL I COULD STAND  
IT NO MORE. I WAS READY TO TAKE MY LIFE,  
PHILIP... READY TO SLIT MY THROAT WITH ONE OF  
MY OWN RAZOR-SHARP SCALPERS, WHEN..."

"THE... ONLY... WAY...  
OUT... CHORE..."



"THAT PHONE CALL SAVED ME, PHILIP. IT ALSO SAVED YOU.  
IT WAS THE HOSPITAL. AN EMERGENCY OPERATION. MAJOR  
LOBOTOMY. IT WAS WHILE I WAS REMOVING THAT DISEASED  
PORTION OF THE PATIENT'S BRAIN THAT IT CAME TO ME."

"OF COURSE! THE REAL WAY OUT! THE NOBLEST,  
MOST SENSIBLE WAY OUT..."



"I FITTED UP MY BASEMENT WITH EQUIPMENT... MADE  
MYSELF AN EXPERIMENTAL LABORATORY... STARTED MY  
RESEARCH... LOST MYSELF IN MY WORK..."

"LOBOTOMIES HAVE CUT AWAY  
WHOLE PORTIONS OF THE BRAIN  
THAT WERE DISEASED... ROTTED...  
TUMORED. THE PART OF THE BRAIN  
THAT WAS LEFT CONTINUED TO  
CARRY ON THE BODY PROCESSES..."



"I... SPENT TWO YEARS TRACKING DOWN THE ANSWER... AND  
THEN I FOUND IT AND MY CHANCE CAME WHEN YOU CALLED  
ONE DAY..."

"WHAT? OH, I'M SORRY TO HEAR THAT, PHIL! YOU'RE  
NOT GOING WITH HER? THEN WHY NOT COME HERE  
AND SPEND THE TWO WEEKS WITH ME? GOOD!  
I'LL EXPECT YOU, THEN! GOOD-BYE..."



THAT WAS A GREAT, WASN'T IT, PHILIP? JOSEFA HAVING TO GO HOME FOR TWO WEEKS DUE TO AN ILLNESS IN THE FAMILY! IT CAME AT JUST THE RIGHT TIME. I WAS READY...

YOUR MOVE, ANDY? HEH, HEH. JUST LIKE OLD TIMES, EH?

I... I SEE THE SIGNS, PHIL! YOUR MARRIAGE IS FALLING ON YOUR JOSEFA. SURELY YOU, DON'T SHE...?

'REMEMBER HOW YOU TURNED ON ME, ANDY?'

ARE YOU MAD, ANDY? WHERE DO YOU GET SUCH A CRAZY IDEA? I LOVE HER. EVEN IF SHE ISN'T SO BRILLIANT! SHE'S FUN, ANDY! I'VE NEVER BEEN SO HAPPY...

POOR LOYAL PHILIP! YOU DON'T WANT TO HUNT HER, DO YOU? YOU DON'T WANT TO CAST HER ASIDE LIKE THE TRASH SHE WAS FOR WASTING YOUR LIFE... SUFFOCATING YOUR WONDERFUL MIND IN GREARY TRIVIALITIES. WELL, YOU DIDN'T POOL ME, PHILIP. I FITTED YOU, IF FROM THE BOTTOM OF MY HEART...

'AND I SAVE YOU WARNINGS, AS ONE FRIEND TO ANOTHER...'

IF YOU KEEP UP WITH THAT WOMAN... LET HER DRAG YOU DOWN TO HER MORNING DEPTHS... YOU WILL BE DEGRADING YOURSELF!

STOP IT, ANDY! THAT'S ENOUGH! EITHER WE DROP THE SUBJECT OR...

'TOO BAD, PHILIP! TOO BAD YOU WERE SO STUBBORN! IF I'D ONLY CONVINCED YOU...'

ALL RIGHT, PHILIP! NO NEED TO GET ANDY! THE SUBJECT IS CLOSED!

YOU MENTIONED SOMETHING ABOUT SOME EXPERIMENTS YOU'VE BEEN DOING, ANDY!

OH, YES! COME ALONG! I'VE SET UP A LABORATORY IN THE CELLAR. THIS WAY...

WHY, YOU'VE GOT A GREAT DEAL OF ELECTRONIC EQUIPMENT DOWN HERE, ANDY! DON'T TELL ME YOU'RE WORKING ON MY BACK?...!

NO, PHILIP! I'VE BEEN WORKING ON THEORIES RELATING TO BRAIN SURGERY, RECENTLY, IN FACT... I'M ABOUT READY TO PERFORM MY FIRST SEVENTY-FIVE PERCENT LOMBOTOMY...

ALL YOU NEED IS THE PATIENT, EH, ANDY?

DOCTOR HOBART LOOKED UP, HIS DREAMY THOUGHTS RETURNED TO THE PRESENT BY THE SHARP HAMBERING ON THE DOOR...

OH, BLAST! I FORGOT!  
IT'S THURSDAY! THEY'RE  
HERE FOR THEIR WEEKLY  
VISIT!

KNOCK  
KNOCK

DOCTOR HOBART STEPPED OUT THROUGH THE SLIDING DOORS OF THE LIBRARY, TURNING TO CLOSE THEM.

I'LL BE BACK IN AS  
SOON AS THEY'VE GONE,  
PHILIP! THEN WE CAN  
CONTINUE OUR GAME!

THE LIBRARY DOORS LOCKED, ANDREW BRUMBY OPENED THE FRONT DOOR...

WELL, PHILIP!  
JONORA! COME  
IN... COME IN...

WE CAN'T  
STAY LONG  
TONIGHT, CAN  
WE DEAR?

HUH?  
OH, YEAH...  
I HEAR.  
NO, NO! WE CAN'T!

DOCTOR HOBART LED HIS GUESTS PAST THE LIBRARY INTO THE SITTING ROOM...

GOING DANCING AGAIN,  
PHILIP? AREN'T YOU  
GETTING A LITTLE OLD  
FOR THAT?

HUH? MAH, WE  
ENJOY DANCING...  
DON'T WE, JONORA?  
LOSER FOLK DANCING...

IT WAS A DULL, REGULARITY VISIT WITH JONORA OBVIOUSLY IMPATIENT TO GO, AND PHIL DOING LITTLE TO CARRY ON ANY CONVERSATION. THIS IS THE WAY IT'S BEEN EVERY WEEK FOR TWENTY YEARS...

WELL, WE REALLY MUST  
BE GOING? COME ALONG,  
PHILIP?

HUH? OH,  
YEAH? BYE,  
ANDY? SEE  
YOU...

OF COURSE,  
PHILIP! NEXT  
WEEK? GOOD-BYE...

DOCTOR HOBART LED THEM TO THE FRONT DOOR, WATCHED THEM HURRY DOWN THE WALK TO THEIR WAITING CAR...

THEN HE UNLOCKED THE DOOR AND WENT INTO THE LIBRARY...

YOU KNOW, PHILIP, I DON'T THINK JONORA NOTICED THE LEAST DIFFERENCE WHEN SHE CAME HOME FROM THAT VISIT TO HER FAMILY TWENTY YEARS AGO. SHE STILL HAS THE THINGS SHE WANTS OF HER HUSBAND, THE PHYSICAL THINGS. SHE'S PERFECTLY SATISFIED WITH YOUR BODY, AND...

... AND TWENTY-FIVE PER-  
CENT OF YOUR BRAIN, AND  
I'VE GOT THE REAL YOU,  
PHILIP... THE IMPORTANT  
PART OF YOUR BRAIN... YOUR  
CREATIVE ARTISTIC PART...



THE BRAIN FLOATED LAZILY IN THE  
JAR OF AMBER LIQUID...

AND SO THE FEARS STRETCH  
HAPPILY AHEAD OF US, PHILIP!  
YOU AND I... TOGETHER TILL  
DEATH... IN MENTAL COMPANION-  
SHIP.



DOCTOR HOBART FLIPPED ON THE  
VOICE AMPLIFIER SWITCH FOR THE  
FIRST TIME THAT EVENING... AND  
TURNED THE VOLUME...

ALL RIGHT,  
PHILIP! GO  
AHEAD! RANT  
AND RAVE!

OH, GOD? WHY  
DID YOU DO IT?  
WHY? I LOVED  
HER! I WAS HAPPY  
WITH HER! WHY DON'T  
YOU BELIEVE ME?



DOCTOR HOBART SHOOK HIS HEAD, SMILING WARMLY  
AT THE BRAIN SUSPENDED IN THE MUBBLING LIQUID...

OH, DON'T BE A FOOL, PHILIP! WHY MUST WE  
ALWAYS GO THROUGH THIS... EVERY NIGHT...  
BEFORE WE CAN SETTLE DOWN TO A NICE QUIET  
EVENING? I DID THIS FOR YOUR OWN GOOD!  
I RESCUED YOU FROM THAT NITBIT FEMALE.  
WHY, IF YOU HAD GONE ON LYING WITH HER FOR  
THE PAST TWENTY YEARS...



...YOU WOULD  
HAVE LOST  
YOUR MIND!



IT'S YOU WHO LOST YOUR  
MIND, ANOTHER! YOU? YOU'RE  
MAD! MAD! AND, OH LORD,  
LOOK WHAT YOU DID TO ME!



DOCTOR HOBART REACHED FOR THE VOICE AMPLIFIER SWITCH. THE BRAIN  
SEEMED TO TWIST SLIGHTLY AS IT FLOATED INSTANTLY IN THE JAR.

MUST I TURN YOU OFF, PHILIP, OR WILL YOU  
BE GOOD SO WE CAN GO ON WITH OUR GAME?  
ER... I BELIEVE IT'S MY MOVE!

NO? WE STOPPED  
LAST NIGHT AFTER  
YOUR MOVE! IT'S  
MY MOVE...



HEH, HEH! WHAT WAS THAT ABOUT A  
WEDDING OF MINDS? CERTAINLY  
SOUNDS LIKE THE MAD DOCTOR  
AND HIS BOTTLED BRAIN ARE  
MARRIED. LISTEN TO THEM ARGUE  
ABOUT WHO GOES FIRST, AND  
YOU'LL KNOW ABOUT WHO GOES  
FIRST... TO JOIN THE E.G. FAR-  
ARROWS... THAT IS... WHEN YOU  
SEE THE STUFF YOU CAN GET, LIKE  
BACK ISSUES

WHEN YOU WRITE US  
FOR ORDERING  
INFO. NOW, THE  
HOUSE-KEEPER  
AGREE WITH A  
FAVOR TO DRIVE  
ALL YOU MARRIAGE  
GAMES. I'LL SEE  
YOU LATER!





# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HER, HERE AND NOW THAT G.K. HAS DRILLED YOUR BLOOD WITH HIS GRIFTY GAPE, IT'S TIME FOR ME TO FREEZE IT! YEP, IT'S YOUR HOPE IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO ENTERTAIN YOU WITH A VISIT TO AN INSANE ASYLUM. I CALL THIS MAD OLUMPTIYAH... THIS TALE OF FEAR IS IT TO IN THE BOOBY-NATCH...

## COME BACK, LITTLE LINDA!

HE OLD MAN SAT IN THE DAMP DARKNESS OF HIS TUSTEY-PRANDUM ASYLUM CELL, SOBBING QUIETLY. HE SAT WITH WIDE STARRING EYES AND CLENCHED FISTS AMID THE FOUL ODOR OF DECAY AND ROT AND UNREMOVED HUMAN EXCREMENTS. AND HE CALLED HER NAME. SUTTER. SUTTER.

LINDA! LINDA! COME  
BACK TO ME, LINDA...



DOCTOR MORGAN ULLMAN, THE DIRECTOR OF THE COUNTY INSANE ASYLUM, MOVED SLOWLY THROUGH THE DARK OIL PASSAGEWAY LINED ON EITHER SIDE WITH ANCIENT OAKEN DUNGEON DOORS. AND THERE WAS A FAINT SMILE ON HIS HARD COLD FACE. HIS ASSISTANT, ERIC HAGEN, FOLLOWED CLOSE BEHIND.

IT WAS A STROKE OF GENIUS, ERIC, MAKING USE OF THESE OLD DUNGEON CELLS. DID I EVER TALKED YOU FOR GIVING ME THE IDEA?

THE MONEY YOU PAY ME IS THOUSANDS ENOUGH, DOCTOR ULLMAN!



DOCTOR ULLMAN STOPPED AT ONE OF THE METAL DOORS. HE SELECTED A KEY FROM THE RING HE CARRIED...

WELL, THE MONEY I PAY YOU IS THE LEAST I CAN DO, ERIC. HOW LONG HAS IT BEEN, BOBB?

TWO YEARS, DOCTOR ULLMAN!



THE DOCTOR INSERTED THE KEY INTO THE LOCK AND TWISTED. THE BOLT SNAPPED OPEN. THE DOCTOR LAUGHED...

TWO YEARS, BUT IT'S BEEN TWO YEARS SINCE WE EMPTIED THE WARDEN AND HERDED ALL THE INMATES INTO THESE DUNGEON CELLS?

YES, BUT TWO YEARS!



THE DOCTOR TURNED TO ERIC, WHO TOWERED OVER HIM, TALL AND GRIN AND MUSCULAR...

DO YOU REALIZE HOW MANY SHEETS WE DIDN'T HAVE TO BUY IN TWO YEARS, ERIC? HOW MANY BLANKETTES?

QUITE A LOT, BUT...



THE DOCTOR PUSHED OPEN THE SQUEALING METAL DOOR...

DO YOU KNOW HOW MUCH WE'VE SAVED ON LAUNDRY... CLEANING... FOOD...

QUITE A LOT, ERIC.



THE OLD MAN SAT IN THE DEEP DARKNESS OF HIS CELL, WHISPERING SOFTLY...

LINDA? WHERE DID YOU GO, LINDA? LINDA...?

YOU SAY HE CALLS THAT NAME CONSTANTLY...

ALMOST ALL THE TIME, ERIC.



THE DOCTOR SHOOK THE OLD MAN. THE OLD MAN TURNED WITH ERIC STARING EYES...

WHO IS LINDA, YOU OLD FOOL?

LINDA? LINDA? LINDA IS MY LOVE!

PROBABLY SOMEONE IN HIS PAST, DOCTOR!



THE DOCTOR UNHAILED THE HAUNTING DOOR OF THE DARK CELL, AND PETCHED...

LINDA, MY LOVE! COME TO ME!

PER? CHOKE... PROBABLY? LET'S SAY... GET OUT OF HERE, HE'S BEYOND HELP?

WE'RE GOING TO CLEAN THESE CELLS OUT, DOCTOR... BEFORE AN EPIDEMIC BREAKS OUT...



THEY SLAMMED THE CELL DOOR SHUT AND MOVED BACK UP THE CORRIDOR...

PERHAPS YOU'RE RIGHT, ERIC! A DEAD INMATE MEANS WE LOSE HIS ALLOTMENT, AND WE DON'T WANT THAT TO HAPPEN, DO WE?

I'LL HAVE THE MORE RATIONAL INMATES DO THE CLEANING, DOCTOR. IT'LL SAVE HAVING TO HIRE ANYBODY...



...OFF THE WHIRLING STONE STEPS LEADING TO THE ASYLUM BUILDINGS ABOVE...

YOU ARE CONCERNED ABOUT BEING ECONOMICAL, ERIC. I'M PROUD OF YOU.

EVERY BRICK SAVED MEANS FORTY CENTS FOR ME! WHY SHOULDN'T I BE?



...AND OUT THROUGH THE DESERTED MUSTY WARDS, DOCTOR ULLMAN STOPPED AT A FILTHY WINDOW, LOOKING OUT...

IT'S TIME TO TURN ON THE LIGHTS, ERIC. WE WANT EVERYBODY DOWN THERE TO THINK THE WARDS ARE STILL OCCUPIED.

VERY WELL, DO THAT RIGHT NOW...



FAR BELOW THE BLEAK GREY INSANE ASYLUM, DOWN IN THE VALLEY, LIGHTS BLINKED ON AS TWILIGHT TURNED TO NIGHT. THE PEOPLE IN THEIR CLEAN WHITE HOUSES SAT AT CLEAN WHITE TABLES AND ATE FROM CLEAN WHITE DISHES AND NEVER DREAMED OF THE HORRORS GOING ON ABOVE THEM...



THEY NEVER HEARD THE UNMUTED SCREAMS OF THE INMATES IN THEIR SLIMY STINKING DUNGEON CELLS... NEVER FELT THE STING OF ERIC'S WHIP...



THEY NEVER TASTED THE DISH WATER SOUP... THE SPOILED BLOP MEAT... THAT WAS FED TO THE INMATES. WHAT HAPPENED, ERIC?

HE COMPLAINED, BOB. WHY DID YOU HAVE TO WHIP HIM?

HE DIDN'T LIKE THE MEAL TONIGHT!



OH! WELL, IF HE DOESN'T LIKE WHAT WE SERVE HIM, DON'T GIVE HIM ANY FOR A WHILE. WE'LL APPRECIATE IT, AFTER... SAY... THREE DAYS!

NO! NO! I PLEASE I'LL... STARVE! I'M SORRY... BOB. I'M SORRY...



LINDA! LINDA...  
COME TO ME!

IF THEY  
WERE ONLY  
ALL LIKE  
HIM, EH, DOC?

WHAT IS IT, DOCS YOU'RE WHITE AS A SHEET?

IT'S FROM THE STATE BOARD OF HOSPITALS... THEY'RE ARRIVING TOMORROW FOR AN INSPECTION TOUR...

WE'VE GOT TO MOVE THE PATIENTS  
BACK UPSTAIRS...GET CLEAN  
SHEETS FOR THE BEDS...SCRAM  
THE NURSES TELL THEM SKINE.  
WOWEE, YOU IDIOT!

Y-Y-YES,  
DOCTOR  
ULLMANN!

ALL RIGHT. LET'S GO UPSTAIRS! ON THE DOUBLE! BET MOVING! THERE'S MORE TO DO!

G'WON, OLD MAN! OUT OF YOUR CELL! OUT! I SAID...

NO! NO!

"MOMMY! LINDA WILL  
 BE COMING. I DON'T  
 WANT TO MISS HER!  
 LINDA..."

"HE'S GIVING  
 ME TROUBLE."  
 "DID...  
 THAT  
 WHIP..."

UPSTAIRS, I SAID!  
UPSTAIRS!

NOT NOT? I WANT  
MY LINDA? I WANT.  
I-I-I-I-I-I-

ALL RIGHT LONG, IN THE WARD, THE STINKING WHIP ROSE AND FELL, UPON THE WALLING INMATES ON...



MAYBE WE OUGHT TO PUT HIM BACK DOWN THERE... IN THE DUNGEON!



THE INMATES COVERED IN FEAR AND TERROR, THERE WAS UNDERSTANDING IN THEIR EYES. EACH ONE OF THEM KNEW THAT THE DOCTOR WANTED BUSINESS. THERE WOULD BE NO SLIPS OF THE TONGUE FROM ANY OF THEM...



ALL THE POOR ASYLUM PATIENTS SCURRIED ABOUT WITH PAIS AND WOPS AND POLISHING CLOTHS...CLEANING THE LONG-ABANDONED WARD, ALL, THAT IS, EXCEPT THE OLD MAN WHO SAT IN A CORNER SOBING SOFTLY...



BUT HE COULD CARE! HE'S A FRODOLE! HIM AND HIS STUPID LINDA! MAYBE HE'LL TALK! MAYBE HE'LL TELL THEM WHERE HE'S BEEN KEPT FOR TWO YEARS!



DOCTOR MALLAM TURNED TO THE OTHER INMATES... HE BRANDISHED THE WHIP...



ONLY THE OLD MAN, OBLIVIOUS TO EVERYTHING, CONTINUED TO SIGH...



IN THE MORNING, THE WARDS WERE SPARKLING CLEAN, EACHES WAS MADE WITH FRESH CLEAN SHEETS AND SPOTLESS BLANKETS. THE INMATES HAD ALL BEEN BATHED AND DRESSED IN NEW UNIFORMS. EVERYTHING WAS READY FOR THE BOARD'S INSPECTION, AND THEN...



THEY'RE HERE! NOW REMEMBER MY WARNING!

SOB... LINDA...

THEY MOVED THROUGH THE ASYLUM, SMILING, CRITICAL-MINDED, EYES EVERYWHERE.



YOUR LETTER CAME SO LATE, GENTLEMEN, I HAD NO TIME TO...ER... PREPARE. YOU'LL HAVE TO ACCEPT THE PLACE AS IT IS!

THAT WAS THE IDEA, DR. ULLMAN? HMMM?

THEY NOTED THE TEMPTING DOORS DRIFTING FROM THE KITCHEN...THE GLEAMING BRASS OF THE BEDS...THE IMMACULATE CONDITION OF THE WARDS...

YOU MUST BE COMFORTABLE, DR. ULLMAN. THE ASYLUM SEEMS TO BE EXTREMELY WELL RUN. ARE THE PATIENTS HAPPY?

ARE THEY, SIR?



THEY WENT FROM BED TO BED...TALKING TO THE INMATES... INQUIRING...



HOW IS THE FOOD?

E-EXCELLENT! OH, YES...

ARE YOU WELL TREATED?

F-YES, SIR.

DO YOU HAVE ANY COMPLAINTS?

SUDDENLY THE WARD NOISEDRAVE WITH AN AMBUSHED CRY...



LINDA! I WANT LINDA!

WHO'S THAT, DR. ULLMAN?

OH, DON'T MIND HIM, SIR. HE'S HARMLESS...

THE OLD MAN SAT UP STARING WILDLY...



THEY TOOK ME AWAY FROM LINDA!

WHAT'S HE TALKING ABOUT, ULLMAN?

SOME-ER... FIRMEN- OF HIS IMAGINATION. WE'VE BEEN GIVING HIM PSYCHIATRIC TREATMENT.

HE CLIMBED FROM HIS BED...



I WANT MY LOVE! LET ME GO BACK TO LINDA!

NOW, NOW, OLD MAN, BACK INTO BED.

NO! LET HIM GO!

THE OLD MAN SCAMPERS ACROSS THE WARD, DOWN THE CORRIDOR TO THE CELLAR DOOR...



...DOWN THE WHIRLING STONE STEPS, THE BOARD FOLLOWED...



ALONG THE DIM DARK PASSAGEWAY...



THE BOARD MEMBERS PEERED INTO THE CELL, WHERE THE OLD MAN SAT COOING HAPPILY. THEY SMILED. THEY SAW THE TELL-TALE SIGNS... SMELLED THE TELL-TALE COORS.



BEHIND THEM, THE OTHER INMATES WERE COMING DOWN THE STONE STEPS, MARCHING ALONG THE PASSAGEWAY, FILING INTO THEIR RESPECTIVE DUNGEON CELLS...



THE BOARD MEMBER MOTIONED TO THE OLD MAN'S CELL, OR ULLMAN LOOKED... THEN PAID. HE WAS IN THERE ALL RIGHT... COOING AT LINDA, WHISPERING WORDS OF ENCHANTMENT TO HIS LOVE...



YEA, HEH? WELL, HOOOES! THERE'S A JOGGING LITTLE TALE OF DEVOTION, AND SO TENSE, TOO, WHAT WITH ST. VALENTINE'S DAY JUST AROUND THE CORNER. NOW, I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO D.E., WHO'S GOT A CIRCUS FARM TONIGHT AT YOU. OH, BY THE WAY, IF ANY OF YOU WANT TO KNOW WHAT NIGHTMARE ARE IN STORE FOR YOU, IF YOU'D LIKE TO FIND OUT WHETHER YOU'RE GOING TO DIE VIOLENTLY OR NOT, JUST VISIT AN ASTROLOGIST FRIEND OF MINE. HE SPECIALIZES IN HORRORSCOPES!



LINDA THE OLD MAN'S LOVE, WAS A BIG FAT UGLY FOUR-DIMENSIONAL RAT

"WEE, HOO!"



# HEH, HEH! YEP! IT'S... THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

President and CEO—Stephen A. Gappi

Publisher—Russ Cochran

Dear CRYPT,

I love your comics and your tests of words. I am a witty gut-twisting fan of your comics. I love CRYPT #10, "Grounds For Horror." People should not let little kids work because it just drives them crazy. They seem to make up stories of who really did their killing.

Keep printing your stories. You have a very horror-hunger fan club out here. It's ok to print my address and zip code, I'm dying for a gut-bustin' pal.

Orlando Garcia

829 W Superior ST  
Chicago, IL 60622

May I suggest a truce?

—CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

Hi! It's Shawn again. I have almost all your comics. All I need is 5 more. Anyway, how are you? I wanted to ask you something, WHY is your show not on anymore? I am very disappointed.

My brother threw a party when he heard you weren't on anymore, and I got a huge poster of the HBO version of you. You're the last thing I see before I go to bed! Well, I gotta go.

Shawn Van Ellis

Philadelphia, PA

This is your late brother if promises.

—CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

It is its genre, each issue of your eerie covers. Before doing on this one, #24, I realized it represented 3 1/2% of the entirety.

On page 5 of "Food for Thought", there is an invisible robe that Merta slips on. Perhaps it's the emperor's new robe? Ye know, at the turn of page 7, I figured Merta was targeted for the final twist instead of Carl.

In "Pearly to Deed", I guess Larry finally had his fill of Phil.

Bob Gorley

Camarillo, CA

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I have two dozen comics and a toy of you.

Jeep Lovelace

Anchorage, AK



I have two Ellen comics and a fan BN you! I'm a lucky dog!  
—CK

So "The Crypt-Keeper's Corner"

In issue #24: "Food for Thought" page 7 panel 7, who is Martin? It is Merta in the other 47 panels.

The caption on panel 8 page 4 of the story "Pearly to Deed" reads: "They both talked in love with her. . ." (who missed the "D" key on the typewriter?)

It's quite a coincidence that in 1954 CK used the word "Merit" in the intro to the story "Pearly Schooner", because in 1995 that word is the talk of the land.

In "Half-Sacked!" The Old Witch says that membership in the EC-FanAddict Club is limited to 250,000,000 people. That's almost the entire population of the United States, that's a lot of Addict! It's a nationwide epidemic!

David Dyllano

Warrington, CT

Let's slip you into a buried box and check YOUR excavation, David-baby! The "Titanic" disaster was common enough in the popular mind for the first 65 years, imagine if our report of WERD SCIENCE 8 had appeared in the last six months!  
—CK

Dear CK

"Undertaking Pator", #24, seems to touch on a lot of taboo subjects for a 50c comic, death and its consequences in the form of the mortuary, murder of innocents by an unscrupulous druggist in collusion with the mortician, a sheriff's loss of a parent, and the subsequent revenge by a group of kids on the evil govt-rape defying authority in the process) and, finally, violent assault and murder in a graveyard. The kids witnessing the graveyard murder is straight out of HUCKLEBERRY FINN. Quite an intricate plot for a 'lowly' comic book!

How original (and typical) of EC to have a story narrated by a grave ("The Graving Grave")! This is one of the traits that put EC above all others in its day, and continues to 40 years hence!

EC's retelling of "The Sleeping Beauty" result, reworked, reveals a tired old fairy tale with snappy lingo and a Transylvanian twist.

Barry McCollum

Alton, IL

I wondered "whatever happened to my Transylvanian Tumb?"  
—CK



Dear Crypt-Keeper,

"Tales from the Crypt" #4 was great. Here's my review of it:

The cover Jack Davis does what Jack Davis does best, he impresses EC fans, and often even sells comics to fans of non-EC comics and people who watch the TV show. The ink are pathetic, though.

"Food for Thought": This story is pretty good, and is better than the TV episode, which has very, very little to do with this comic story. The next three stories are all about the ocean, or at least have something to do the ocean.

"Pearly to Dead": This is a great story with great artwork. I like how George Evans carefully drew his stories with fine line and shadow. I really like the part when Phil and Larry are clearing the way for the US Navy to blow up Japan, and I LOVE the panel where Larry sees Phil's rotted face through the porthole, because it's very creepy Great story!

"Pine's Schizophren": This is not a bad story, but I don't like Bernie Kingstain's art. It's boring and ugly. If an artist with style, like Jack Davis, Johnny Craig, Graham Ingels, George Evans or Jack Kamen illustrated this story it would have been much better.

"Half-Baked!": The creepy ocean thing is wearing off a little bit, and yet, this still manages to be the best story in the book! The ocean scenes are great. Graham Ingels is a wonderful artist.

Too bad he never drew you or The Vault-Keeper Jack Davis, usually the artist who's supposed to draw you, has drawn The Vault-Keeper and The Old Witch before; Johnny Craig, who's mostly known for drawing The Vault-Keeper, has drawn (and painted) you and The Old Witch before; but Graham Ingels, who's known for making the stupid, annoying character some people call The Old Witch worth looking at, has never drawn you or The Vault-Keeper. How sad! You and The Vault-Keeper are much better, much more original characters than The Old Witch, and I hate the title of her comic. A "Crypt of Terror" makes sense, a "Vault of Horror" makes sense, but a "House of Fear" doesn't. A "house" is not a type of creepy place.

Questions: 1) Who's version of you is the most accurate, Al Feldstein, Jack Davis, Johnny Craig, Jack Kamen, the Archaic film or Kevin Kline, who created the TV version of you? 2) Are you related to The Vault-Keeper at all, even distantly? 3) Who is the oldest Ghoul-Lord? PLEASE ANSWER THESE QUESTIONS SERIOUSLY AND HONESTLY!!

Zeke Stern

Encinitas, CA

Did you know if you play Lennon saying, "Charlie and The Deathkads" from the LET IT BE album backwards he says "Oh! Soaring past the porthole!"

We slip the entire mailorder staff in liquid Mylar twice a year, when we spray them for ticks.

If you were a habitue of The Old Witch's haunts, as I unwillingly am, you'd agree they're mighty creepy!

Only Jack Davis captured the pure physical power and ethereal grace that is me!

-CK

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

It's me, Monsterman, again. I just read your latest job, #23, yesterday.

"Undertaking Peter" was great, up to the nice little poetic justice at the end. Still more proof that Jack Davis was the greatest of the EC artists.

"The Drowning Grief" was good, but it just felt like a remake of that one about the trunk. Besides, that thing about "earth worms" was way too necrophiliac.

Your version of "Sleeping Beauty" was funny, particularly the character of "Melen"? I look forward to see how they do it on your show.

"Shadow of a Doubt" was too good a story for that old bet, The Old Witch. Who'da think that a shadow could kill someone? That's something to try on those dog days of summer.

Monsterman

address unknown

Er, you mean "Shadow of Death", no doubt. DON'T try it during a solar eclipse! Only the late Jack Davis could do complete justice to the "Melen"? line (but that shouldn't be a problem for me, should it?).

-CK

Also, include this month are PASC and PRACY #11 each for \$24.95, TWO-PIED and VALOR next month. Don't forget HAUNT, FRONTLINE COMBAT and CRIME. Get them at your local comic book shop or SUBSCRIBE (see our ad in this issue for details).

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THIS COMIC REPRINTS  
TALES FROM THE CRYPT #41\* (#38, APR/MAY 84)  
COVER by Jack Davis  
"Operation Friendship" Jack Davis  
"Come Back, Little Uncle" George Evans  
"Current Attraction" Jack Kamen  
"Mass Call" Graham Ingels

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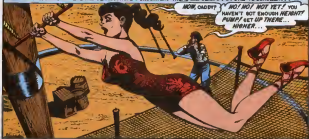


I CALL THIS ELECTRIFYING YARN...

# CURRENT ATTRACTION



AGE HAS CREEPT UP ON OLD RUPE AND STIFFENED HIS JOINTS AND SLACKENED HIS MUSCLES AND FINALLY HE'S BEEN FORCED TO CLIMB DOWN FROM THE FLYING TRAPEZES WHERE FOR ALMOST A QUARTER OF A CENTURY HE'D REIGNED AS KING. NO MORE WOULD THE BAND PLAY AND THE DRUMS ROLL AND THE AUDIENCE SAP AS THE SPOTLIGHT FOLLOWED HIM ACROSS THE BIG TOP IN HIS DEATH-DEFYING AERIAL ACT. HE WAS A *HAS-BEEN*... A *FORGOTTEN NAME*... A *FADED STAR*. HIS PERFORMING DAYS WERE OVER. BUT THE CIRCUS WAS IN OLD RUPE'S BLOOD. IT WAS HIS LIFE. AND SO HE'D STAYED ON... ENTERING THE ANIMALS, HELPING THE RINGMASTERS, DOING ANY ODD JOB AVAILABLE... JUST SO HE COULD BE NEAR THE TRAMMER AND THE TAMARU AND THE CANYON WORLD HE LOVES. AND THEN THERE WAS JEAN... RUPE'S DAUGHTER. THERE WAS JEAN'S *FUTURE* TO CONSIDER...



MOM, DADDY... *NO! NO! NO! YET!* YOU HAVEN'T GOT ENOUGH HEIGHT! PUMP! SET UP THERE... HIGHER...

JEAN HAD BEEN TEN WHEN HER MOTHER HAD MISTIMED HER DOUBLE FORWARD SUMMERSWALT AND CAME CRASHING DOWN TO THE BIG TOP FLOOR... LEAVING JEAN AN ORPHAN AND RUPE A WIDOWER. THAT HAD BEEN EIGHT YEARS AGO...



THAT'S IT, HONEY! THAT'S IT! REMEMBER! TUCK! TUCK! TIGHT WHEN YOU SPIN... HERE... SOUL...

OLD RUPE FINGERED THE NET-POLE NERVOUSLY AS IF HE WERE AFRAID IT MIGHT SUDDENLY VANISH, LEAVING HIS PRECIOUS DAUGHTER SWINGING ALONE UP THERE WITHOUT ITS LIFE-PRESERVING PROTECTION...



NO! NO! TOO SOON! EEEEEEE...

FOR A MOMENT OLD RUPE'S HEART STOPPED BEATING AS HE WATCHED HIS LOVELY DAUGHTER'S BODY FLAIL, THEN PLUMBE DOWNWARD. IT WAS AN OLD MEMORY, ONE THAT HE WOULD NEVER FORGET.

IT'S...IT'S ALL RIGHT, HONEY! RELAX! RELAX WHEN YOU HIT!

JEAN SOBBERD AS SHE CLIMBED DOWN FROM THE NET AND REACHED FOR THE CAPE HER FATHER HELD OUT FOR HER...

I'LL...I'LL NEVER BE ANY GOOD, DADDY! NEVER! DON'T! WHY DON'T WE EYE UP?

YOU'LL DO IT, HONEY! YOU'LL SEE! YOU'LL BE A STAR SOMEDAY!



THEY WALKED IN SILENCE ACROSS THE TANNAPARK FLOOR, DOWN BETWEEN THE SEATS, AND OUT INTO THE SUN-LIGHT...

A TALL, HANDSOME, DARK-EYED MAN CAME STRIDING ACROSS THE BROADWAY, GRINNING BROADLY...

AN, THERE YOU ARE! I HAVE BEEN LOOKING ALL OVER FOR YOU!

OH, DADDY! IT'S ENRICO! AND MY EYES ARE ALL RED!

BO! I SEE YOU HAVE BEEN PRACTISING, LOVELY ONE! THAT IS GOOD!

I'LL NEVER BE ANY GOOD, ENRICO!

YOU'LL BE SOME SOMEDAY!

DON'T TALK THAT WAY! WHY, WHEN YOUR MOTHER AND HE STARTED...

OH, ENRICO! THIS IS MY DADDY! EVERYBODY CALLS HIM 'RUPE'!

A PLEASURE TO MEET THE FATHER OF SUCH A CHARMING SON, MR. EN... RUPE!



RUPE STUDIED THE GRAY-LOOKING STRANGER.

YOU'RE NEW AROUND HERE, AREN'T YOU? WHAT'S YOUR ACT?

ENRICO IS A STAR, DADDY! HE USUALLY GETS TOP BILLING! HE JUST JOINED OUR CIRCUS YESTERDAY! HE'S A KNIFE-THROWER!

I ALSO THROW THE MACHETE AND THE CLEAVER.



ENRICO TURNED TO JEAN.

I WILL SEE YOU LATER, THEN... AS WE PLANNED. NO REVISIT.

ALL RIGHT, ENRICO! SEE, FOR NOW!



OLD RUFE AND HIS DAUGHTER  
WALKED ON IN SILENCE UNTIL THEY  
CAME TO THEIR TRAILER, THEN...

I DON'T LIKE  
HIM! HE'S A  
BREAD-LOOKIN'  
CHARACTER!

HE'S VERY  
SWEET, DADDY...  
AND VERY  
MUNDANE-  
STOOD! HIS  
WIFE...

OLD RUFE SPUN AROUND...

HIS WIFE IF HE'S  
MARRIED?

OH, YES! HIS  
WIFE IS HIS  
PARTNER IN  
THE ACT! SHE  
STANDS UP  
AGAINST A  
BOARD AND  
HE...

I'LL NOT HAVE  
MY DAUGHTER  
GOING OUT  
WITH A MARRI-  
ED MAN!

DON'T BE SILLY,  
DADDY! WE'RE  
JUST FRIENDS!  
NOTHING MORE!  
HE'S VERY UN-  
HAPPY!

THAT NIGHT, RUFE CAUGHT ENRICO'S ACT. IT WAS QUITE SENSATIONAL! HIS WIFE WOULD STAND SPREAD-EAILED BEFORE A BOARD AND HE'D COOLLY KISS HER WITH KNIVES, THROWING THEM IN RAPID SUCCESSION, ENDING UP WITH A CLEAVER BLAMING INTO THE WOOD BEHIND HER HEAD...

BRAVO!

GREAT! TERRIFIC!

GOOD!

ISN'T HE

I'D HATE TO

WE HIS WIFE

AND NAME

HIM SOME

AT MY ONE

SLIP...



THAT'S JUST IT, DADDY!  
THEY DON'T GET ALONG!  
HE'S NOT IN LOVE  
WITH HER ANY LONGER.  
BUT SHE REFUSES TO  
GIVE HIM A DIVORCE!

AND YOU MEAN  
TO TELL ME  
SHE LETS HIM  
STAND THERE  
AND THROW  
KNIVES AT  
HER?



ISN'T SHE HORRIBLE?  
ENRICO IS A MURDEROUS  
WRECK! HE DOESN'T WANT  
TO HARM A HAIR ON HER  
HEAD, THAT MAKES IT ALL  
THE MORE DIFFICULT  
FOR HIM!

HOW COME YOU'RE  
SO INTERESTED IN  
HIS PRIVATE LIFE?



I... I THINK I'M IN  
LOVE WITH ENRICO,  
DADDY!

WHAT? IN LOVE WITH HIM? DON'T  
BE A FOOL, JEAN! YOU'RE TOO  
YOUNG! WHAT ABOUT YOUR CAREER?  
IN ANOTHER FEW MONTHS, YOUR ACT  
WILL BE BE FINE AND YOU'LL BE ON YOUR  
WAY! LOVE ISN'T FOR YOU! NOT  
NOW!



JEAN SHOOK HER HEAD...

I'M SORRY, DADDY! I CAN'T JUST TURN MY HEART OFF LIKE A RADIO! WHEN IT HAPPENS, IT HAPPENS! AND YOU CAN'T DO ANYTHING ABOUT IT!

YOU CAN AVOID LETTING IT HAPPEN! YOU DON'T HAVE TO LOOK FOR IT!



JEAN SMILED AT HER FATHER AND STARTED OFF ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS...

IT'S TOO LATE, DADDY! IT'S ALREADY HAPPENED!

JEAN! COME BACK! JEAN!



HE COULD SEE THEM IN THE MOON-LIGHT... MEETING AND WALKING OFF... ARM IN ARM... HIS DAUGHTER, AND ENRICO...

NO, JEAN! NO! I WON'T LET YOU RUN YOUR LIFE! I'VE WORRIED TOO LONG AND TOO HARD WITH YOU TO LET YOU THROW IT AWAY!



THAT NIGHT, OLD RUFUS TRIED TO WAIT UP FOR HIS DAUGHTER TO COME HOME. HE REMEMBERED THE CLOCK HANDS POINTING TO THREE BEFORE HE DOZED OFF... AND WHEN HE AWOK, IT WAS MORNING, AND JEAN WAS SLEEPING SOUNDLY...

THIS CANNOT GO ON! IT'S INSANE! I'VE GOT TO TALK TO HIM...



RUFUS DRESSED ABRUSLY AND HURRIED ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS TO THE TRAILER MARKED 'THE GREAT ENRICO'. HE HAMMERED ON THE DOOR.

JEAN? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

YOUR... YOUR MARRIAGE... I WANT TO SEE HIM... ALONE!



ENRICO'S WIFE WAS A TIRED-EYES BLEACHED GLOUGE WHO REEKED OF LIQUOR. SHE STEPPED OUT OF THE TRAILER AND SMILED...

SURE, OLD MAN! ONLY YOU'LL HAVE TO MAKE HIM UP. HE WAS OUT ALL NIGHT LAST NIGHT. HE'S STILL ASLEEP.

TH-THANK YOU!



OLD RUFUS LEANED OVER THE SLEEPING ENRICO AND SHOOK HIM ROUGHLY...

HUH? WHO... WHAT... YAWN... WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I WANT TO TALK TO YOU! ABOUT MY DAUGHTER! I WANT YOU TO LEAVE HER ALONE!



THE GREAT ENRICO STRODE ABOUT THE TRAILER IN A FLAKY LOUNGING ROBE, PUFFING ON A LONG CHARETTE HOLDER, LISTENING TO OLD RUPE PLEAD WITH HIM...

SHE IS YOUNG... *IMMA* PERISHED. SHE HAS HER WHOLE LIFE AHEAD OF HER. I SEE OF YOU...



I AM *JOHNNY*, BEHON! I CANNOT WAKE UP YOUR DAUGHTER!

ENRICO SMILED...

I FIND HER TOO ATTRACTIVE?

I... I'M WARNING YOU, ENRICO!



DO NOT *THREATEN* ME, ALL RIGHT! OLD MAN. IF YOUR DAUGHTER ASKED AND I CANNOT FALL IN LOVE WITH YOUR *WASS-INGG*... THEN IT SHALL BE WITHOUT THEM! *GOOD DAY!*

YOU IN A *MISE* MISE? NOW ... LOOK OUT!



OLD RUPE LEFT ENRICO'S TRAILER AND STAMPEDED ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS, PUMPH... HE CAME INTO THE BIG TOP, HIS MIND *THRILLING*...

I CAN'T LET HIM *WRECK* MY *JEANNIE*'S LIFE! I'VE GOT TO GET RID OF HIM! I'VE...



THE BOARD THAT THE GREAT ENRICO USED IN HIS ACT STOOD IN ITS POSITION IN THE CENTER RING, READY FOR THE NIGHT'S PERFORMANCE. OLD RUPE STUDIED ITS FITTED AND SCARRED SURFACE...

HMPH! YOU CAN ALMOST OUTLINE THE SILHOUETTE OF ENRICO'S WIFE FROM ALL THESE *KNIFE* MARKS! AND THE *CLEANER* MARK IS... IS...



ENRICO'S VOICE RANG IN OLD RUPE'S EAR...

I FIND HER... TOO ATTRACTIVE?

OF COURSE! THAT'S IT! ATTRACTION! THAT'S IT!



OLD RUPE LET HIMSELF INTO THE ELECTRICIAN'S SHED WITHOUT BEING SEEN. HE DRUNKLED SOFTLY TO HIMSELF...

EVERYONE KNOWS ENRICO NO LONGER LOVES HIS WIFE. EVERYONE KNOWS SHE WON'T GIVE HIM A DIVORCE. SO... WHAT BETTER WAY TO GET RID OF HER...



RUFUS CARRIED THE COIL OF FIRE COPPER WIRE AND THE BAR OF SOFT IRON BACK TO THE BIG-TOP.

TOMORROW...TOMORROW ENRICO THROWS THE CLEAVER DIRECTLY AT HIS WIFE'S HEAD... SPLITTING IT OPEN... KILLING HER. IT WILL BE SO OBVIOUS! HE WILL BE CHARGED WITH MURDER! ALL THE EVIDENCE WILL POINT TO IT! EVEN JEAN WILL HAVE TO TESTIFY AGAINST HIM!



...AND SLOWLY, PAINFULLY, RUFUS WOUND THE COPPER WIRE AROUND THE IRON CORE, CREATING A POWERFUL ELECTRO-MAGNET. THEN HE SECURED THE MAGNET TO THE REAR OF THE TARGET BOARD, EXACTLY BEHIND WHERE ENRICO'S WIFE'S HEAD ALWAYS RESTED.

THERE! NOW...TO ATTACH THE WIRES TO A STRONG CURRENT...AND WE'RE SET! WHEN HE THROWS THAT CLEAVER...



THAT'S RIGHT, THE SHOW BEGAN AS USUAL. OLD RUFUS STOOD BY, WAITING FOR ENRICO'S ACT TO BEGIN...

HE GOES ON IN THIRTY SECONDS!

HEY, RUFUS! I GOT A JOB FOR YOU! C'MON!

ME...



THE HOUTABOUT FOREMAN LED RUFUS OUT OF THE BIG TOP BEHIND. THE DRUMS ROLLED...THE SYMBOLS CLASHED...

THAT'S...THAT'S ENRICO'S ACT STARTING! I WANTED TO SEE IT! I...

YOU'LL SEE IT TOMORROW! THIS IS MORE IMPORTANT! I OWE THIS SOMEBODY A FAVOR!



RUFUS FOLLOWED THE FOREMAN ACROSS THE CIRCUS GROUNDS. A FIGURE STOOD IN THE MOONLIGHT, WAITING...

HELP THIS GAL CARRY HER BAGS DOWN TO THE STATION, EN, RUFUS!

I-FOU! YES!

NO! I'M LEAVING HIM! YOUR DAUGHTER CONVINCED ME!



RUFUS'S BLOOD FROZE! THE DRUMS WERE BUILDING UP TO A CRESCENDO NOW. THE END OF THE GREAT ENRICO'S ACT WAS AT HAND. RUFUS COULD SEE THE CLEAVER RAISED...SEE IT FLYING THROUGH THE AIR...SEE IT WAVER AS IT ENTERED THE MAGNETIC FIELD...SEE IT SWERVE INWARD...CUTTING...SPLITTING...THE BLOOD...THE RED RAW FLESH AND BONE...THE BRAINS...

CHUCK...AND

SHE? JEAN? MY DAUGHTER?

SHE'S TAKING MY PLACE IN THE ACT, YOU! C'MON! LET'S GO!



HEY, HEH! SO IF ANYBODY'S INTERESTED IN A SLIGHTLY USED, BROOD-AND-KNOT-FORGERS BOARD, IT'S AVAILABLE. ONLY THIS IS, IT'S A BIT STAINED! OF COURSE, AS FAR AS I'M CONCERNED, IT OUGHT TO BE USED THAT WAY! SORT OF JOSS SOMETHING, DON'T YOU THINK? AND NOW, IT'S TIME

TO TURN YOU OVER TO THE OLD WITON, WHO WILL BRING UP MY BORNED MAN FOR THIS ISSUE. OH! REMEMBER THE E.G. FAN ABOUT CLIM? DON'T DO NOTHING! JUST REMEMBER IT!

BYE!



BEHIND THEM SYMBOLS CLASHED, AND A BASS DRUM BOOMED THE GRAND FINALE!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE! WELL, DON'T JUST STAND THERE WITH YOUR TONGUES HANGING OUT! COME IN! COME INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR! I'VE GOT ANOTHER SLIME-SERVING BREWING IN MY CAULDRON, ALL READY TO DISH OUT. YEP! IT'S ME, AGAIN... THE OLD WITCH! HEE, HEE! HUNGRY FOR HORROR, ARE YOU? GOOD! THEN CLOSE YOUR DILATED NOSTRILS AND OPEN YOUR LITTLE LICKING MOUTHS AND I'LL SPOIL IN YOUR FACE... THIS IS HANS BRUNER'S SEERING RECIPE... VINTAGE 1988. LISTEN, NOW, TO THE TASTY TALE OF TERROR HANS DALLS...

## MESS CALL

WOLFEY

AAAAH! IT IS WARM AND DRY HERE... IT IS GOOD TO FEEL WARM AND DRY. I AM SO TIRED... SO VERY TIRED... AND MY EYES ARE HEAVY WITH SLEEP. I CLOSE THEM. I SLEEP...

COME, CORPORAL! WAKE UP! ON YOUR FEET! I HAVE FOR YOU AN IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT! COME AT ONCE!



I AM GOING OUT THERE AGAIN. I DO NOT LIKE IT OUT THERE. IT IS WET AND COLD OUT THERE. HERE IT IS WARM AND DRY...

...YOU WILL PROCEED TO AREA H IN 10 YOU WILL DATE YOUR REPORT NOW! 21, 30, 17... AND THE EXACT HOUR THAT IS IMPORTANT!

YES, OVERLEUTENANT!



I AM CRAWLING ON MY BELLY THROUGH THE MUD. IT IS COLD AND DAMP AND I SHIVER AND MY TEETH CHATTER. I BRIP MY GUNNER TIGHTER. I AM APPROACHING AREA 14 NOW. I MUST BE QUIET. *THEY ARE THERE... THE ENEMY...*



THEY ARE JUST OVER THAT HILL AHEAD. I WILL HIDE IN THIS SHELL-HOLE. I MUST BE QUIET...



*'NOW IS, BUT, 10:40 P.M. ENEMY POSITION 14 FOR MEET UP.'* I STOP WRITING MY REPORT. I LISTEN. SOMEONE IS HERE... HERE IN THIS SHELL-HOLE... WITH ME...

HE COMES AT ME... AN ENEMY SOLDIER. I BRING MY GUNNER AROUND, BENDING MY BARREL UP HIS SOFT BELLY... PLUNGING IT UPWARD... FEELING THE CRUNCH-ING BONE... HEARING THE SUCKING SOUNDS...

I AM FRIGHTENED. HIS ARMS SWING OUTWARD. I PULL MY BARREL AND THRUST AGAIN... STABBING. SLASHING. CUTTING HIM TO PIECES. I SEE HIS FACE... HIS EYES... AND THE BLOOD POURING... AND I AM SICK...



HE... HE IS DEAD? AND NOW MY OVERLEUTNANT IS CALLING ME. CALLING ME BACK. EVERYTHING IS FADING. NO? IT IS NOT MY OVERLEUTNANT CALLING ME. IT IS THE DOCTOR'S VOICE. I AM BACK WHERE IT IS WARM AND DRY.



THE DOCTOR IS TALKING TO THAT MAN ABOUT ME...

SO... YOU HAVE BEEN FOR YOURSELF HERE HENRIKON. IT IS ALWAYS THE SAME VIOLENT NIGHTMARE? HE DREAMS VIVIDLY, EACH NIGHT OF THAT EXPERIENCE IN THE FRENCHES? IT HAUNTS HIM? HOWEVER, HE IS PERFECTLY STRONG AND HEALTHY IN EVERY OTHER RESPECT. SO YOU NEED NOT HAVE ANY FEARS...



I WAS ASLEEP, BUT I AM AWAKE NOW. IT IS MORNING AND THE DOCTOR IS TALKING TO HERR HEINRICH...



...AND SO I HAVE ARRANGED EVERYTHING! YOU MAY TAKE HIM TODAY! I NEED NOT TELL YOU HOW *WASTEFUL* WE ARE!

ACH! I AM GLAD TO DO THIS FOR HIM, HERR DOCTOR!

HANS! I HAVE NEWS! YOU ARE LEAVING HERE TODAY, MY BOY! HERR HEINRICH IS TAKING YOU TO HIS HOME...TO LIVE! YOU WILL HELP IN HIS SHOP, OF COURSE, BUT THE WORK WILL BE LIGHT, AND THE HOURS SHORT! WHAT DO YOU THINK OF THIS, HANS?



THIS IS VERY GOOD OF YOU, HERR HEINRICH!

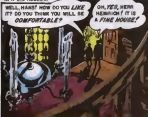
ACH! IT IS NOTHING, HANS!

WE ARE RIDING IN A CARRIAGE. IT IS GOOD TO BE OUT OF THE HOSPITAL... HERR HEINRICH IS A KIND MAN...

YES, HANS! IT IS VERY *SCARCE*, HANS! BUT I HAVE SAVED CAREFULLY AND SELL ONLY TO MY OWN CUSTOMERS AND FRIENDS! BUT *ENOUGH* OF BUSINESS... LOOK! THERE IS MY ADDRESS...YOUR NEW HOME...



HERR HEINRICH'S HOUSE IS BIG. IT IS VERY NICE TO LIVE IN A BIG HOUSE...



WELL, HANS! HOW DO YOU LIKE IT? DO YOU THINK YOU WILL BE COMFORTABLE?

OH, YES, HERR HEINRICH! IT IS A FINE HOUSE!

THIS FOOD IS GOOD. I LIKE ESPECIALLY THE PICKLED MEATS... AND THE WINE...



TO YOUR GOOD HEALTH, HANS! HERE! MORE WINE, MY BOY! IT IS GOOD FOR YOU!

IT IS WONDERFUL WINE...AND DELICIOUS FOOD, TOO!

MY ROOM...IT HAS NICE THINGS. THE BED IS VERY SOFT, AND I AM TIRED...



SLEEP WELL, HANS! AND REMEMBER! TOMORROW, WE GO TO MY BUTCHER SHOP! GOOD-NIGHT!

GOOD-NIGHT, HERR HEINRICH! I WILL WORK HARD FOR YOU!

ANNN! IT IS WARM HERE... WARM AND DRY. I LIE ON MY NEW SOFT BED...AND I COZE...



COME, COME! MAKE UP! ON YOUR FEET!

I AM STABBING... SLASHING... CUTTING HIM TO RIBBONS. I SEE THE BLOOD POURING, AND I AM SORE. HE IS DEAD. AND NOW, MY OVERLEUTNANT IS CALLING... CALLING ME BACK. NO! IT IS NOT MY OVERLEUTNANT. IT IS...



READY? COME! WAKE UP! ...IT IS A FINE MORNING AND WE HAVE A FINE BREAKFAST WAITING!

NOH! OH, HERR HEINRICH!

NO! OF COURSE YOU DON'T SEE IT HAND! I AM EXCULSIVE! IF I WERE TO HAVE A BIG OPEN STORE, ALL GERMANY WOULD COME TO ME FOR MEAT... AND PROOF IN ONE DAY... THEY WOULD OLEAN ME OUT! UNDERSTAND? AH! HERE WE ARE.

YES, HERR HEINRICH! I UNDERSTAND.



HERR LUDMEYER HAS COME. WE ARE DRINKING AND EATING SOOO PICKLED MEATS. AND I GROW TIRED.



THIS MEAT? IT IS WONDERFUL! BUT YOU?... YOU DON'T EAT ANY, HERR HEINRICH?

NOH! WHEN YOU ARE A BUTCHER, YOU EAT TOO MUCH MEAT!

HA! HA! BUT COME, HERR LUDMEYER, I MUST SHOW YOU MY BONE DOLLAR!

I WILL GO TO BED NOW! GOODNIGHT!

I GO TO MY ROOM AND UNDESS AND LIE ON MY SOFT BED... SOFT AND WARM AND DRY.



COME, CORPORAL! WAKE UP! ON YOUR FEET!

THE AIR IS COOL, BUT I AM WARM. WE ARE WALKING TO HERR HEINRICH'S SHOP. I FEEL GOOD...



WE ARE SOON THERE, HAND! ONLY UNTIL THE END OF THIS NARROW STREET!

...BUT I SEE NO SHOP, HERR HEINRICH.



THERE IS MUCH MEAT IN HERR HEINRICH'S SHOP AND MANY PEOPLE COME TO BUY...

...THERE YOU ARE, HERR LUDMEYER! 8 POUNDS! CORRECTLY! ER... NOW ABOUT SOME SCHNAPPS AT MY HOUSE TONIGHT? WE CAN TALK ABOUT THE MEAT SHORTAGE?

HA! HA!

NOH! NOT ONLY DO YOU SELL ME MEAT BUT YOU INVITE ME TO YOUR HOUSE? YES, I WOULD ENJOY THAT, HERR HEINRICH!

HE COMES AT ME AND I SMILE AROUND, HIDING MY SCAVING INTO HIS SOFT BELLY... CUTTING, STABBING, SLASHING HIM TO RIBBONS... THE BLOOD POURING, POURING...



I AM SWEETENING THE SHOP. I DO THIS EVERY MORNING. AND I HELP HERR HERRICH LIFT THE HEAVY THINGS. I AM STRONG.



WANT? COME GIVE ME A HAND, LIKE A GOOD FELLOW?

YES, HERR HERRICH.

THERE! THAT IS GOOD! HA! HA! NO ONE IN ALL BERGARY HAS AS MUCH MEAT AS I! ANOTHER CUSTOMER IS HERE!



HERR HERRICH IS FRIENDLY. HE IS AGAIN INVITING SOMEONE TO HIS HOUSE.



YES, SUSTAN. WE NEED FINE! RELAXATION! YOU... YOU HERRICH! AND YOUR WIFE! COME BRING ME TO MY HOUSE TONIGHT. WE WILL HAVE SCHNAPPS! WHAT DO YOU SAY?

WIFE! TELL ME! WHERE DO YOU LIVE?

AGAIN I AM DRINKING AND EATING WITH HERR HERRICH'S FRIENDS. MANY TIMES I DO THIS... TONIGHT, I DON'T FEEL GOOD. DRINKING... TOO MUCH...



OH, FRAU SHOTS. YOU HAVE TASTED NOTHING UNTIL YOU HAVE TRIED THE IMPORTED FINE'S IN MY WINE CELLAR. COME, SUSTAN... FRAU SHOTS? I WILL SHOW YOU!

YOU ARE A GENEROUS HOST, HERR HERRICH!

I... I AM VERY SLEEPY! I WILL GO TO BED NOW! GOODNIGHT.

I AM IN MY ROOM! IT IS DARK HERE! I AM DIZZY! EVERYTHING IS SPINNING AND I AM FALLING... FALLING...



M... MY HEAD! IT HURTS! IT... IT IS WARM AND DRY HERE! IT IS GOOD TO FEEL WARM AND DRY. I AM SO TIRED, AND



COME, CORPORAL! WAKE UP! ON YOUR FEET! I HAVE FOR YOU AN IMPORTANT ASSIGNMENT.





HURRY, CORPORAL! THERE IS MUCH TO DO TONIGHT! COME! COME!

YES, OVERLEUTENANT!

IT IS COLD AND DAMP AND I SHIVER AND MY TEETH CHATTER...

THIS WAY, CORPORAL! THIS WAY... BUT BE CAREFUL! THE ENEMY IS JUST OVER THAT HILL...



I MUST BE QUIET. I WILL HIDE IN THE SHELL HOLE AND MAKE OUT MY REPORT...

NOVEMBER 21, 1917  
10:40 P.M. ENEMY POSITION: 80 YARDS WEST OF...

LISTEN, HANST! LISTEN! TAKE THIS! YOUR MAUSER...



SOMEONE IS IN THIS SHELL HOLE WITH ME. I TURN, GRIPPING MY MAUSER...



THERE HE IS, HANST! GET HIM! GET HIM!

AN ENEMY SOLDIER... I SWING AROUND, SENDING MY BAYONET INTO HIS SOFT BELLY... FEELING THE CRUMMING BONE... HEARING THE DUCKING SOUND...



GOOD, HANST! GOOD! NOW, GO TO WORK!

I PULL OUT MY BAYONET AND THRUST AGAIN, STANDING, GLASHING, CUTTING HIM TO RIBBONS...



CAREFUL, HANST! CAREFUL!

I SEE HIS FACE... HIS EYES... AND THE BLOOD POURING... POURING... AND I AM SO...



HANST! WHY DO YOU STOP? FINISH! FINISH YOUR WORK!

MY HEAD HURTS WHERE I STRUCK IT AND MY DREAM VANISHES, AND I AM STANDING IN A DARK CAMP CELLAR BEFORE A...A...



OH, LORD! A BUTCHER'S CHOPPING BLOCK!

NO OH HANG! FEMININE!

GHORE! THERE... THERE IS A BODY ON THE BLOCK! IT IS... HEAR SHOTS! AND THIS IS NO BAYONET! THIS IS A CLEAVER IN MY HAND!



GHORP! I ORDER YOU! FEMININE YOUR ASSIGNMENT!

I...I HAVE DONE A HORRIBLE TERRIBLE THING! BUT... BUT HOW MANY OTHER TIMES HAVE I DONE THIS? HOW MANY OTHER TIMES HAS HE...HE...? OOOOH...MY HEAD! MY MEMORY! IT'S COMING BACK!



HANG! NOT SO UPTIGHT!

I REMEMBER NOW! YES! YES! I WAS A BUTCHER... A GOOD BUTCHER! THEN A SOLDIER! I WAS A SOLDIER AND I KILLED A MAN IN A SHELL HOLE! THERE WAS AN EXPLOSION! EVERY NIGHT I HAVE DREAMED OF THAT KILLING! Y...YOU! YOU MADE ME DO THIS FRENCH WORK WHILE I DREAMED!



YES!...YES! YOU FOUND OUT I WAS A BUTCHER! LIKE NO OTHER SHOP IN ALL GERMANY, YOURS IS FULL OF MEAT! ALL OF THE VISITORS YOU HAVE BROUGHT DOWN HERE? YES! OF COURSE! YOUR EXCLUSIVE SHOP IS FILLED WITH HUMAN MEAT!!



N...NO! NO!

HE COMES AT ME...AND EVERYTHING GOES BLACK. IT IS SUDDENLY COLD AND DAMP AND HE IS THE ENEMY SOLDIER AND I AM STABBING MY BAYONET INTO HIS SOFT BELLY...CRUNCHING THE BONE...HEARING THE SUCCESSES SOUNDS... STABBING...SLASHING...CUTTING HIM TO RIBBONS...HIS FACE...HIS EYES...THE BLOOD FOUNTAINS...POURING...



GOOD LORD!

GHORE...

HIE, HIE! WELL, I REMEMBER THAT'S MY DELIRIUM DISH FOR THIS ISSUE OF G.I.'S WAR. POOR HANG! THAT BLOW ON THE NOSE IN CLEARED IT FOR A FEW MINUTES... BUT HE SOON SLIPPED BACK INTO THE OLD GRIND! ANYWAY, HE WAS PUT INTO A HUGE WARM DRY ROOM WITH CUSHIONED WALLS AND BARRED WINDOWS AND HE NEVER ATE ANOTHER HAMBURGER AS LONG AS HE LIVED! 'WELL, NOW WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN Y. A. 'S WAR, THE VALLEY OF HORROR!







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NO. 42  
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# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER

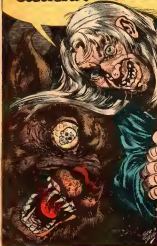





# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

GREETINGS, BOYS AND GNOMES! WELCOME ONCE AGAIN TO THE MAGAZINE VOTED "I'D MOST LIKE TO BE SHIPWRECKED ON A DESERT ISLAND WITH, IF MARILYN MONROE WERE ALONE TOO!" (GIGGLE) THERE MUST BE AN HORROR IN THAT SOMEWHERE! ANYWAY, IT'S YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER MAN, WELCOMING YOU TO ANOTHER SLIMY SESSION OF SICKENING SELECTIONS STARTING WITH THIS SCREAM-STORY GUARANTEED TO DRIVE YOU NOTED! IT'S A MASTERPIECE OF MUSICAL HORRORITE... A FAVORITE OF MINE! I CALL THIS DISGUSTING BELLYING INTO DELIRIUM...

## CONCERTO for VIOLIN and WEREWOLF



SACHA BARIAN, THE FAMED CONCERT VIOLINIST, CLUTCHED HIS PRECIOUS STRADIVARIUS PROTECTIVELY TO HIS BREAST AND CURSED SOFTLY TO HIMSELF AS THE OLD COACH RUMBLE AND BUMPED OVER THE BUTTED ROAD THROUGH THE ROMANIAN COUNTRYSIDE. THE OLD COACH HAD BEEN THE ONLY MEANS OF TRANSPORTATION AVAILABLE TO SACHA. TAXI DRIVERS HAD LOOKED AT HIS WIDE-EYED AND TURNED AWAY WHEN HE TOLD THEM HIS DESTINATION. SO HE'D CLIMBED INTO THE ANCIENT VEHICLE, WITH ITS TIGHT-LIPPED DRIVER, AND NOW HE WAS BEING WHIPPED AND JOSTLED ABOUT AS IT THUNDERED INTO THE NIGHT...



BLAST! THESE CONFUSED TRANSYLVANIAN HORRORS ARE EVEN WORSE THAN I REMEMBER THEM. IF IT WEREN'T TO SEE KASIE & KOSIA, I WOULD NEVER EVER ATTEMPT SUCH A JOURNEY!

THE FOAM-FLOUGHED HORSE CHARGED INTO THE OMBRIOUS BLACK HILLS WITHOUT SLACKENING ITS MAD PACE. SACHA LEANED FROM THE COACH WINDOW AND SHOUTED AT THE DRIVER, WHO REMAINED AS HE HAD BEEN FROM THE START OF THE TRIP, GULLED AND MUTE.

"SLOW DOWN, YOU FOOL! DO YOU WANT TO GET US BOTH KILLED?"



SO THE FAMED VIOLINIST COULD ONLY PRAY FOR SAFE DELIVERANCE TO HIS DESTINATION, SOON, THE CREAKING BROOMING COACH CLATTERED LOUDLY OVER COBBLESTONES. THEY WERE PASSING THROUGH A TOWN THAT SACHA RECOGNIZED.

"OH, SAKA! THANK HEAVENS! ONLY SEVEN MORE MILES TO BRUDJA!"



THE LAST SEVEN MILES BETWEEN ORCHAM AND BRUDJA WERE EVEN WORSE THAN WHAT HAD GONE BEFORE. THE COACH BOUNCED AND HEAVED OVER THE PITTED AND SCARRING DIRT ROAD. BUT AT LAST...

SO THIS IS BRUDJA! NO WONDER THAT DON'T HAVE THE ROAD HERE. ONLY A FOOL WOULD COME TO THIS GOD-FORSAKEN TOWN NOW! WHY EVERYTHING IS HOLDING UP WITH DECAYING ROT.



HEH, HEH! 'ONLY A FOOL', HE SAYS. PARSON MY AUNTIE FOR, KIDDED, BUT YOU'RE NEVER SEEN SACHA FOOL AS SACHA... RISING HIS EGG AND A \$22,000 FIDDLE TO REACH THIS HORRIBLE MAN-LET! YOU'LL SEE WHAT I MEAN.



VASILE IDOMA LIVED IN AN ANCIENT HOUSE AT THE EDGE OF TOWN. SACHA STOOD BEFORE THE MAN HE'D DREAMED SO LONG OF SEEING, BUT TIME HAD DONE ITS WORK ON HIS OLD TEACHER.

NO! I DON'T RECOGNIZE YOU! WHO ARE YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

MAESTRO! IT'S YOUR OLD PUPIL... SACHA... SACHA BARAK!



SACHA, ALMOST WEPT AS HE LOOKED AT THE FACE OF HIS TEACHER... A FACE THAT HAD ONCE BEEN SO HANDSOME AND POWERFUL, AND NOBLE, BUT NOW WAS WITHERED AND TOOTHLESS, WITH PAGED WATERY EYES. VASILE WAS A WERE SHELL OF THE STRICT, STERN MAESTRO SACHA HAD SO LONG REVERED...

FORGIVE ME, SACHA! I DO NOT SEE AS WELL AS I USED TO! NOW \$000 OF YOU TO REMEMBER

AS IF I COULD EVER FORGET THE MAN WHO RECOGNIZED MY TALENT WHEN I WAS BUT A CHILD... AND TAUGHT ME ALL I KNOW



SUDDENLY, SACHA NOTICED THE OLD MAN STIFFEN. SAW HIS FACE GROW GREY AND HIS EYES FILL WITH TERROR...

SACHA! YOU SHOULD NEVER HAVE COME TO VISIT ME HERE IN BRUDJA! IT IS DANGEROUS.

DANGEROUS? WHY, MAESTRO?



THE OLD MAN LOOKED AROUND UNEASILY, THEN STARED AT HIS FORMER PUPIL, AND WHISPERS:

"DON'T YOU REMEMBER, SACHA? THIS IS WERE-WOLF COUNTRY? DON'T YOU RECALL THE INCIDENT THAT TOOK PLACE ALMOST TWENTY YEARS AGO WHEN I WAS LIVING IN GYMSHAF AND YOU USED TO COME FOR LESSONS?"

"HOW COULD I? SO MANY THINGS HAVE HAPPENED SINCE! WHAT INCIDENT?"



"DON'T YOU REMEMBER THAT YOUNG COUPLE? THEY'D DRIVEN HERE FROM BUDAPEST, IMPULSIVELY SEEKING A TOUR THROUGH THE TRANSYLVANIAN ALPS. THE RUBBED ROAD BETWEEN GYMSHAF AND ARANY HAD PROMISED TOO MUCH FOR THEIR MOTOR CAR."

"BE PATIENT, MARTA! I WILL FIND THE TROUBLE IN A MOMENT!"

"IF YOU DON'T, I SHALL FREEZE IN THIS MOUNTAIN NIGHT AIR, RUDDOLF!"



"A FULL MOON HAD RISEN, FILTERING THROUGH THE SHAGGED OLD TREES, AND AN OMINOUS SILENCE HAD ENVELOPED THE LONELY SURROUNDING COUNTRYSIDE. A RUSTLING OF HEAVY BRAMBLES CAUSED THE WOMAN TO TURN HER HEAD, AND WHAT SHE SAW BROUGHT A SOUL-PIERCING SCREAM FROM HER THROAT."

"RUDDOLF! EEEEEAA... WHAT IS IT, MARTA?"



"IT WAS A WERE-WOLF! IT SPRANG UPON THE YOUNG WOMAN, DRIVING ITS BLOOD-SHARP FANGS INTO HER SOFT WHITE FLESH. WHILE THE YOUNG MAN SCREAMED FROM BENEATH THE CAR."



"AAAAAAGHHHHHHH..."

"MARTA! MY GOD...!"

"DON'T YOU REMEMBER, SACHA? YOU HEARD THE SCREAMS... THE COMMOTION OUTSIDE. YOU WANTED TO GO..."

"NEVER MIND, SACHA! YOUR DEPART IS ONLY TWO WEEKS OFF! WE MUST PRACTICE. IT IS NOTHING! GET BACK TO YOUR MUSIC STAND!"

"BUT, MASTER! THERE MUST BE SOMETHING WRONG! LOOK! MEN RUNNING... WITH LANTERNS..."



"AS THE YOUNG MAN CAME AT THE SLOBBERING, SNARLING, BLOODTHIRSTY WERE-WOLF, IT FLED, SHAKING WITH HORROR. HE FLUNG HIS LANTERN AFTER THE FLEEING BEAST. THE LANTERN SHATTERED AGAINST A TREE TRUNK, BURNING INTO FLAME, AND HE SAW, BY THE SUDDEN LIGHT, HIS WIFE'S ARM DANGLING FROM THE WERE-WOLF'S GROWLING MOUTH."



"CHORE..."

"DON'T YOU REMEMBER THE WOMAN LYING BESIDE THE CAR, HER EYES STARRING, HER FACE ASHEN... AND HER HUSBAND LISTENING IN HORROR TO THE WORDS..."

"SHE'S DEAD!"

"NO! OH, LORD...NO!"

"MASTER! WHAT HAPPENED TO HER?"

"COME AWAY, SACHA! COME AWAY!"



THE OLD TEACHER FINISHED HIS STORY WITH A SIGH. SACHA NOTICED THAT HE WAS SHAKING AND COVERED WITH SWEAT, AND HIS TOOTHLESS OLD MOUTH SMILED.

DON'T YOU LOSE YET? OF COURSE, REMEMBER?

MAESTRO? I DO REMEMBER! BUT THE EXPLANATION OF THE INCIDENT WAS SIMPLE ENOUGH. THE WOODS ARE FULL OF WOLVES! THEY'VE BEEN KNOWN TO ATTACK A MAN.



THERE HAVE BEEN MORE INCIDENTS, SACHA! HERE! READ THIS NEWS-PAPER SENT TO ME FROM BUCHAREST!

DO YOU EXPECT ME TO BELIEVE THERE IS A WEREWOLF HERE IN BRUJJA?



I ASK YOU TO BELIEVE THIS? SEE THE DATE? NEARLY TWO MONTHS AGO! READ.

A MEMBER OF SUCH-ARREST SOCIETY PAID WITH HIS LIFE LAST NIGHT WHEN HE IGNORED THE WARNING TO STAY AWAY FROM THE TRAN-SYLVANIAN TOWN OF BRUJJA. THERE WAS A FULL MOON, AND HIS BODY, STRIPPED OF FLESH, WAS FOUND.



THE OLD MAN POINTED TO THE ARTICLE IN THE NEWSPAPER.

"THERE WAS A FULL MOON," SACHA! A LUNATIC MOON! IN TWO DAYS, THERE'LL BE ANOTHER! I REFUSE TO DO NOT STAY IN BRUJJA!

NONSENSE, MAESTRO! I AM AS SAFE HERE AS YOU ARE! IF I AM NOT WELCOME IN YOUR HOME, I WILL GO TO THE INN. BUT I WILL NOT BE FRIGHTENED INTO LEAVING BRUJJA!



THE OLD MAESTRO SHRUGGED HIS SHOULDERS.

YOU WERE ALWAYS STUBBORN, SACHA! AND I DO WANT YOU TO STAY. IT'S JUST THAT, AT THIS TIME OF THE MONTH... AND A STRANGER IN TOWN... WELL... PROMISE ME YOU'LL KEEP YOUR BEDROOM WINDOWS AND DOOR LOCKED...

OF COURSE, MAESTRO! I KNOW HOW TO TAKE CARE OF MYSELF! LOOK.



SACHA OPENED HIS SUITCASE AND TOOK OUT HIS REVOLVER.

I CARRY IT TO PROTECT MYSELF AND MY STRADIVARIUS.

A STRADIVARIUS? A GENUINE STRADIVARIUS? LET ME SEE!



OLD MAESTRO OPENED SACHA'S VIOLIN CASE AND DREW FORTH THE STRADIVARIUS. HE FOMOLED IT REVERENTLY AS SACHA STARED AT HIS GUN.

IF I REMEMBER RIGHT, MAESTRO, LEGEND HAS IT THAT ONLY A SILVER BULLET CAN KILL A WEREWOLF.

BEAUTIFUL! BEAUTIFUL! IT. DON'T SACHA? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING?





SACHA'S EYES NARROWED. HE SMILED GRIMLY...

I'M THINKING ABOUT  
KILLING ME A WERE-  
WOLF, VASILE. DO YOU  
HAVE AN IRON KETTLE  
I MAY USE TO MELT  
DOWN SOME SILVER...

DON'T BE A FOOL,  
SACHA! WHY RISK  
YOUR LIFE?



I AM NO FOOL, MAESTRO!  
THINK OF THE PUBLICITY I  
WILL RECEIVE... HEADLINES  
IN ALL THE PAPERS THROUGHOUT  
EUROPE! 'FAMOUS VIOLINIST  
Frees ROMANY TOWN OF  
RAMPAGING WEREWOLFS!' YOU  
SEE, VASILE, THERE'S **MORE** TO  
SUCCESS THAN WERE **SONDS**!  
EVEN I MUST HAVE PUBLICITY!



SO STOP WORRYING  
ABOUT ME. TELL YOU  
WHAT? YOU MAY PLAY  
MY STRADIVARIUS AS  
LONG AS I STAY HERE.  
THERE? NOW GET ME  
THAT KETTLE...



SACHA SPENT THE NEXT FEW HOURS IN THE CELLAR,  
MELTING DOWN SILVER COINS AND POURING THE MOLTEN  
SILVER INTO A MOLD HE'D MADE BY PRESSING THE SLUG  
FROM AN ORDINARY BULLET INTO MOIST SALT. AND AS  
HE WORKED, GLEESING STRAINS OF A SAD WISTFUL AIR  
PLAYED ON THE STRADIVARIUS BY THE FALTERING HANDS  
OF HIS OLD TEACHER FILTERED DOWN FROM THE PARLOR...

MMM! THE OLD BOY CAN STILL PLAY...



WHEN THE SILVER SLUGS WERE COOLED, SACHA  
REMOVED THE LEAD SLUGS FROM THE REGULAR BULLETS  
AND REPLACED THE SILVER ONES IN THE STEEL JACKETS.  
HE WENT UPSTAIRS, FILLED THE CHAMBERS OF HIS  
REVOLVER WITH HIS HANDWORK, AND PLACED THE GUN  
IN HIS OVERCOAT POCKET...

THERE, MAESTRO! NOW  
I'M READY FOR THE  
WEREWOLF OF  
BRADUA!

UGH FOWE, SACHA.  
SUCH MELLOW SOUNDS  
COME FROM THIS OLD-  
FIDIOUS INSTRUMENT!



THE NEXT MORNING, EVEN THOUGH THE OLD MAESTRO  
WARNED HIM AGAINST IT, SACHA WALKED INTO TOWN.  
THE SUN BEAT DOWN ON THE MARKETPLACE, BUT THE WIND  
IT BROUGHT WAS NOT ENOUGH TO OFFSET THE COLD, SUS-  
PICIOUS STARES OF THE TOWNSFOLK...

MMM! NOT A FRIENDLY FACE AMONG THEM!  
THE WAY THEY LOOK AT ME, YOU'D THINK I  
WAS THE WEREWOLF...



BUT THERE WAS MORE THAN SUSPICION AND GLO-  
RIOUS IN THE TOWNSPEOPLES STARES, SACHA SEEMED  
TO SENSE A CERTAIN TENSENESS... FORTHWITH HOSTILITY,  
HE PLUNGED HIS HAND INTO HIS OVERCOAT POCKET,  
FEELING FOR THE BRASSIER'S STEEL OF HIS  
REVOLVER...

CHOKE. MY GUN?  
IT'S GONE!



SACHA RETURNED AT ONCE TO VASILE KIRIA'S HOUSE. HE WAS VERY UPSET AND SPOKE BITTERLY TO THE OLD VIOLIN TEACHER...

I THOUGHT IT WAS ACCIDENTAL THAT SOMEONE JOSTLED ME WHEN I FIRST ENTERED THE MARKETPLACE, BUT NOW I REALIZE THAT HE MUST HAVE SPOLEN MY GUN. DO YOU KNOW WHAT THAT MEANS, WASILE? ONE OF YOUR TOWNSPeOPLE IS THE WERE-WOLF.

NOW THAT YOUR GUN IS GONE, PERHAPS YOU WILL LEAVE?

SACHA SHRIED AT HIS TOOTHLESS MASTRO...

WAIT A MINUTE! HOW COULD ANYONE KNOW I HAD A GUN? HOW COULD THEY KNOW IT WAS LOADED WITH SILVER BULLETS? HOW COULD THEY? WASILE? YOU...

YES, SACHA! IT WAS I! I TOOK THE GUN FROM YOUR POCKET AND THREW IT DOWN THE WELL! IT WAS ONLY BECAUSE I AM AFRAID FOR YOU...



THE OLD MAN BEGAN TO CRY...

I DID IT FOR YOUR OWN GOOD, SACHA! NOW YOU ARE ANGRY AT ME!

ANGRY AT YOU? NO, WASILE! I AM TORMENTED BY YOUR CONCERN FOR MY SAFETY, BUT I HAVE NO INTENTION OF LEAVING BRADIA!

THAT NIGHT, A SIBBOS MOON, NOT QUITE FULL, BATHED THE OLD MASTRO'S HOUSE IN A GOLD PALE LIGHT. INSIDE, SACHA SCANNED A NEWS-PAPER WHILE WASILE PLAYED THE VALUABLE VIOLIN...

WHY THIS IS LAST MONTH'S BOOM-ARREST JOURNAL, WASILE. AND IT CAME TODAY.

THE MAIL IS SLOW! COMING TO BRADIA, SACHA! YOU CAN UNDERSTAND!



SACHA WAS WELL INTO THE PAPER BEFORE A REPORT CAUGHT HIS EYE. HE LEAPED UP WITH A START...

WASILE! LISTEN TO THAT! THERE WAS A FULL MOON LAST NIGHT WHEN FIVE PERSONS FROM CHIRAB BECAME GORNY WHILE CELEBRATING A WEDDING ANNIVERSARY AND WANDERED INTO THE OLD-FAMED TOWN OF BRADIA.



"...A SEARCHING PARTY FOUND THE FIVE BODIES THE NEXT DAY OUTSIDE THE TOWN. THEY HAD ALL BEEN STRIPPED OF THEIR FLESH! "BARE SKELETONS" UNIDENTIFIABLE"

YES, SACHA! THAT HAPPENED LAST MONTH.

YOU SEE, IT HAS HAPPENED SO MANY TIMES TO SO MANY HUNDREDS OF POOR UNFORTUNATE PEOPLE OVER THE YEARS, THAT WE WERE IN BRADIA AND NO LONGER SHOCKED BY IT!

I RECALL SOMETHING I READ ON MY LAST CONCERT TOUR, WASILE! I WONDER... HMM! OF COURSE! HOW STUPID OF ME! TOMORROW, I AM GOING INTO CHIRAB FOR ANOTHER GUN...



EARLY THE NEXT MORNING, SACHA BARAK, THE FAMED VIOLINIST, WALKED THE SEVEN MILES TO DUNDAY IN ORDER TO PURCHASE THE GUN AND BULLETS HE NEEDED. HE CARRIED HIS EMPTY VIOLIN CASE.

I SHOULD HAVE GUESSED! WELL, TONIGHT THE MOON WILL BE FULL AND I WILL BE WAITING FOR THEM... IN THE MARKETPLACE.

IT WAS PAST NOON WHEN HE RETURNED TO VASILE'S HOME. HE APPEARED CONFIDENTIAL AS HE SHOWED THE OLD MAN THE GUN HE'S BOUGHT....

... AND TONIGHT I WILL GO INTO TOWN CARRYING MY VIOLIN CASE... AND WHO WOULD SUSPECT IT CONCEALS A GUN.

NO ONE? OF COURSE!

THE REST OF THE AFTERNOON WAS SPENT IN THE CELLAR, CAREFULLY MOLDING BULLETS FROM WOLFER SILVER.



AND WHEN TWILIGHT WAS BEGINNING TO SHROUD THE TOWN, SACHA RETURNED TO THE PARLOR WITH HIS SILVER AMMUNITION, LOADED HIS GUN, AND REPLACED IT IN THE VIOLIN CASE....

THERE? DONE? AND NOW GOOD EVENING, VASILE, DON'T YOU EVER TIRE OF PLAYING THE VIOLIN?

NOT THIS ONE, SACHA! NOT A STRADIVARIUS! BESIDES, YOU SAID I COULD PLAY IT WHILE YOU STREED...



SACHA RESTED IN HIS ROOM, LISTENING TO THE LITING STRAINS OF THE VIOLIN. SUDDENLY HE FELT VASILE'S HANDS SHAKING HIM.

IT IS ALMOST TIME, SACHA! THE MOON IS ALMOST FULL! COME! LET US GO!

US?? NO SIR, OLD MAN! YOU'RE STAYING HERE! YOU TOLD ME YOURSELF IT WOULD BE DANGEROUS!



BUT VASILE INSISTED THAT HE WOULD FOLLOW SACHA ANYWAY, SO THEY WALKED INTO TOWN TOGETHER. ABOVE, THE MOON CAST AN EERIE GLOW UPON THE CORNESTONE STREETS. THE MARKETPLACE WAS DESERTED, YET SACHA WAS AWARE OF A FRIGHTENING PRESENCE—SOMETHING HE COULD ONLY FEEL INSTINCTIVELY. THE WEIGHT OF THE WEAPON IN THE VIOLIN CASE COMFORTED HIM.



AND THEN, SLOWLY, THE FRIGHTENING PRESENCE MADE ITSELF KNOWN. THE TOWNSPEOPLE... ALL OF THE POPULATION OF ARDAM... BEGAN TO APPEAR FROM ALLEYS AND DOORWAYS AND DEEP SHADOWS. THEY CAME TOWARD SACHA AND VASILE.



AS SOON AS THEY CAME, SACHA COULD SEE THEIR RED EYES GLOWING IN THE FULL MOONLIGHT, AND THE HAIR BRISTLING ON THEIR FACES, AND THEIR GLEAMING WHITE FANGS GRIPPING SPITTLE. HE COULD SEE THEIR SNARLING, GROOMING, WERE-WOLF PRODS, AND HE FETTERED IN DISGUST.



AND THEN SACHA BEGAN TO LAUGH. HE KNELT AND PLACED THE VIOLIN CASE ON THE COBBLE-STONES, FUMBLING WITH THE LATCHES...

I KNEW I WAS RIGHT! WHEN I READ IN THE PAPER THAT FIVE BODIES WERE STRIPPED OF THEIR FLESH, I KNEW THERE HAD TO BE MORE THAN ONE WEREWOLF!



HE SHRIEKED SHRIILLY AT THEM, HIS WORDS MINGLING WITH THEIR LOW THROATED GROWLS. HE OPENED THE VIOLIN CASE...

AND THEN I REMEMBERED A STORY I'D READ IN AN AMERICAN COMIC BOOK ON MY LAST CONCERT TOUR... A STORY CALLED 'MIDNIGHT MESS' IN A MAGAZINE CALLED TALES FROM THE CRYPT... ABOUT A TOWNFUL OF VAMPIRES! AND I KNEW I KNEW THAT DRUGJA WAS A TOWNFUL OF WEREWOLVES, AND I KNEW I'D HAVE TO BE READY FOR YOU...



THE SNARLING HOWLING BEASTS WERE ALMOST UPON HIM NOW... AND THEIR HOWLING SOUNDED LIKE LAUGHTER TOO. SACHA REACHED FOR THE SUN...

WELL, I AM READY FOR YOU. ALL OF YOU? BECAUSE I'VE GOT A GUN... LOADED WITH SILVER BULLETS? NOT JUST ANY GUN! A THOMPSON SUB-MACHINE GUN! I'M READY... FOR... FOR... GOOD LORD!



SACHA'S LAUGHTER CHOKED BACK IN HIS THROAT AND THE HOWLING CAME UP AS THE BEASTS SPRANG UPON HIM. FOR THERE WAS NO GUN-MACHINE GUN IN HIS VIOLIN CASE... ONLY A USELESS OLD STRADIVARIUS! AND HIS FLASHING DROOLING TEETH TORE AND RIPPED AND GORED SACHA. HE HEARD HIS OLD MAESTRO'S SCOWLING VOICE...

CAREFUL OF THE VIOLIN! AND SAVE SOME SOFT PART FOR A TOOTHLESS OLD WEREWOLF. REMEMBER? I BROUGHT HIM! I FIXED THINGS! I TOOK OUT THE GUN!



AND THAT'S MY VIOLIN! VIOLIN! FIDDLE. LET IT BE A LESSON TO YOU. DON'T FIDDLE AROUND WITH WEREWOLVES OR YOU MIGHT END UP LISTENING TO A FUNERAL MARCH IF SACHA'D ONLY HAD A BETTER MEMORY HE WOULD HAVE REMEMBERED THAT HIS OLD MAESTRO ALWAYS PULLED A SWITCH ON HIM. YOU'VE HEARD THE EXPRESSION, BEAT ME MAESTRO, RIGHT TO THE BODA FOUNTAIN! I AM WAS CENSORED BY A BLUEHOSE ASSISTANT EDITOR WE'VE GOT! NOW, THE WOLF-KEEPER ANKLE. I'LL



ONE YOU LATER MEAN WHILE, I'VE GOT A TOWN LERNALED! I'LL BLOW DON'T FORGET! THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB WANTS YOU. WHEN IF NOBODY ELSE DOES!

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HEH, HEH! AND NOW IT'S MY TURN TO FREEZE THE WATERY BLOOD IN YOUR DISTENDED VEINS, KIDDIES! SO VENTURE INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR... AND YOUR HOST IN HOWLS, THE VAULT-KEEPER, WILL ENTERTAIN YOU WITH ANOTHER SCREAM-STORY FROM MY COLLECTION OF TERROR TONES. I CALL THIS TALE-FAIR...

## BY THE DAWN'S EARLY LIGHT

J. KÖHLER

A BICKERING SWEET SMELL OF FLOWERS MIXED WITH THE BLUNT AROMA OF BURNING WAX. YELLOW CANDLE FLAMES FED ON WHAT FRESH AIR SEEPED INTO THE PARLOR OF HAYSON'S FUNERAL HOME. FRANK WILLIAMS LOOKED FOR THE LAST TIME AT JOAN LOHN'S LOVELY WHITE FACE, THE DEATH-MARK FACE OF HIS BRIDE-NEVER-TO-BE. MR. HAYSON TIFTED RESPECTFULLY ACROSS THE THICK RED CARPET AND SPOKE IN A DOLEFUL VOICE, JUST ABOVE A WHISPER... THE DEAD GIRL'S MOTHER'S SOFT, UNCEASING SOBS FORMING A BACKGROUND FOR THE UNGERTAKER'S IRONIC WORDS...

SHE'S BEAUTIFUL, MR. WILLIAMS. SHE WASN'T LIKE THAT WHEN THEY BROUGHT HER IN, BUT EARL PUT EVERYTHING HE HAD INTO THE JOB BECAUSE HE'S YOUR BEST FRIEND AND HE WAS TO BE YOUR BEST MAN.

YOU'LL... YOU'LL THANK EARL FOR ME... WHEN YOU SEE HIM!



HARRY MARTIN STEPPED FORWARD OUT OF THE SHADOWS, HE REACHED FOR FRANK'S ARM...

G'MOR, FRANK! LET'S GO. I'LL BUY YOU A DRINK!

TH-THANKS, HARRY!



FRANK WILLIAMS PICKED UP HIS BAGS AND LET HIMSELF BE LED FROM THE FUNERAL HOME. HE SMILED BITTERLY AT THE BIRM JOKER...

EARL BOTS MADE HER BEAUTIFUL FOR ME. A WEDDING PRESENT FROM MY BEST FRIEND...

OLD MAN HAYSON IS STUPID! FLAM STUPID!

WHAT AN IDIOTIC THING TO SAY!



THEY SAT IN A BOOTH IN THE ALMOST DESERTED BAR. FRANK WILLIAMS, STILL WEARING THE CLOTHES HE'D FLOWN FROM NEW YORK IN, AND HARRY WARTH, WITH THE BLACK ARM-BAND ON HIS SLEEVE...

WHAT REALLY HAPPENED, HARRY? WHAT'S ALL THIS 'BUNK' ABOUT A VAMPIRE KILLING JOAN?

THE PART ABOUT THE 'VAMPIRE' ISN'T 'BUNK,' FRANK! BUT THE VAMPIRE DIDN'T KILL JOAN. I DID! WE ALL DID!



WHAT ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?

YOU'VE BEEN IN NEW YORK FOR THE PAST MONTH, SO YOU DON'T KNOW WHAT'S BEEN GOING ON. SEE THE ARM-BAND? I'M IN MOURNING FOR MY BROTHER CHARLIE DIED LAST WEEK. THERE WERE TWO OTHER DEATHS THE WEEK BEFORE!



AND YOU'RE TRYING TO TELL ME THAT A VAMPIRE...

YOU DON'T BELIEVE ME, FRANK, BUT I SAW IT...THE VAMPIRE! I'LL TELL YOU ABOUT IT AND YOU'LL BELIEVE...



THE NIGHT AFTER CHARLIE'S FUNERAL, I GOT DOWN MY HUNTING RIFLE. I DIDN'T BELIEVE THE TALK ABOUT A VAMPIRE. I WAS GOING TO GET THE MANIAC THAT WAS SCREAMING OUR STREETS...

WHERE'RE YOU GOING WITH A GUN, HARRY? WHAT GOOD IS A GUN? YOU CAN'T KILL A VAMPIRE WITH A GUN! I-HEAD IT! YOU GOTTA USE A STAKE... A WOODEN...

I KNOW WHAT I'M DOING, HARRY! JUST LOCK THE DOOR BEHIND ME AND DON'T OPEN IT FOR ANYONE BUT ME!



"SO I WENT! EACH NIGHT I HUNTED THE MANIAC, WITH THE WIND HOWLING THROUGH THE DARK STREETS AND THE SNOW CRUNCHING UNDERFOOT..."

I'LL GET YOU! I'LL GET YOU FOR CHARLIE!



"FOR FIVE NIGHTS I WENT OUT INTO THE WINTER BLACKNESS, I GOT TO ASKING MYSELF WHAT GOOD IT WAS GOING TO DO WALKING IN THE BITTER COLD WITH THE SLEET WHIPPING IN MY FACE, BUT THEN I'D THINK OF POOR DEAD CHARLIE WITH THOSE TWO BLOODY PUNCTURES IN HIS THROAT, AND I'D KNOW THE ANSWER..."



MADE HARRY I'LL NEVER FIND HIM BUT I CAN'T QUIT! I CAN'T... NOW...

"THEN, ONE NIGHT, I HEARD A GURGUNG OY. THEN A MOANING JUST A LITTLE LOUDER THAN THE MOANING OF THE WIND. I STARTED RUNNING THROUGH THE DARK STREETS. AND THEN I SAW IT... BRIDGING OVER THE BODY OF A GIRL... ITS UGLY FANGS SUNG INTO HER THIN WHITE THROAT..."

GET AWAY FROM HER, YOU FILTHY WAMP!!

"I RAISED MY GUN, FIRING AS I RAN TOWARD IT. I HEARD THE BULLETS THUD INTO ITS WILE FLESH... SAW IT RISE..."

MY GOD! BULLETS DON'T KILL IT! IT IS A WAMPIRE... ONE OF THE LIVING DEAD! IT IS!

I KEPT AFTER IT, EMPTYING THE RIFLE AT IT... FINALLY LOST IT. IT JUST SEEMED TO VANISH INTO THE SHADOWS. I WENT BACK AND LOOKED AT THE GIRL. SHE SEEMED TO BE BREATHING...

TWO FINGERS IN HER THROAT, JUST LIKE IN CHARLIE'S...



HARRY'S VOICE RAGED. HE LOOKED AT FRANK SITTING ACROSS FROM HIM IN THE BOOTH IN THE DESERTED BAR...

THE GIRL... IT... WAS JOAN?

FEAR! JOAN LOREN I... I RAN ALL THE WAY TO THE FIREHOUSE. I STARTED PULLING THE BELL ROPE...



"THE FIRE-BELL WAS THE ONLY THING I COULD THINK OF TO GET THE TOWN OUT. I KEPT PULLING, MAKING ITS MOURNFUL SOUND SHATTER THE WINTRY SILENCE. AND THEY CAME! THEY CAME RUNNING..."

YOU SAW IT, HARRY? YOU SAW THE WAMP-PIRE?

DID IT GET ANYBODY?

I SAW IT! I SHOT AT IT! BULLETS DON'T KILL IT! IT GOT THE LOREN GIRL.

I TOOK THEM TO WHERE JOAN'S BODY LAY. DOC MORRIS LOOKED AT HER AND SHOOK HIS HEAD...

BLOOD-DRAINED. ALL RIGHT! BUT SHE'S ALIVE SOMEHOW!

SOMETIMES A WAMPIRE'S VICTIM BECOMES A WAMPIRE. THE... THE ONLY WAY TO KILL IT IS...

... IS WITH A STAKE, DRIVEN INTO ITS HEART. AFTER DAWN...



"SOMEBODY GOT A STAKE AND WE STOOD A SILENT, BLOODY VIGIL OVER JOAN'S BODY. I FELT SICK INSIDE... AND COLD... EVEN WITH A NIGHTMAY FIRE GOING... BECAUSE OF WHAT WE HAD TO DO. AND THEN, WHEN DOC SAW THE FIRST IGY BLUE STREAKS OF DAWN IN THE EAST..."

IT'S TIME!



THEY HANDED ME THE STAKE, FRANK. I HELD IT AGAINST JOAN'S HEART. SOMEBODY ELSE STOOD OVER IT WITH A ROCK.



FRANK LISTENED, STUNNED, HIS FACE GROWING...

IT WAS AWFUL, FRANK! THE BEST OF THEM... THEY COULDN'T TURN AWAY! BUT I HAD TO LOOK! I HAD TO SEE!

YOU LOUSY MURDERERS! YOU KILLED HER!



HE REACHED OUT GRABBING HARRY...

WE HAD TO DO IT, FRANK. WE HAD TO! BY NOW, SHE'D BE SLEEPING IN A COFFIN WITH DIRT IN THE BOTTOM DURING THE DAY. AND AT NIGHT SHE'D BE ROAMING THE BACKSTREETS, THIRSTING FOR BLOOD! CHARLES GOT HIS AFTER THAT... JUST TO MAKE SURE! AND THE OTHERS! WE EXAMINED THEIR BODIES... DRIVEN STAKES INTO EACH OF THEIR HEARTS.



FRANK RELEASED HIS HOLD. HIS RAGE AND HATE WAS STILL THERE, BUT HE KNEW HARRY MARTIN AND THE OTHERS HAD DONE WHAT WAS RIGHT...

DON'T I SEND YOU THE TELEGRAM, FRANK, TELLING YOU TO COME RIGHT BACK HOME? DON'T I MEET YOU AT THE AIRPORT?



BUT FRANK DID NOT HAVE TO LOOK FOREVER. TOWARD MORNING, HE HEARD A BLOOD-CONGULING, GURGLESING MASP COMING FROM THE DARK STREET AHEAD. HE SPURTED THROUGH THE SNOW... SAW THE LOATHSOME HORRIBLE THING BENDING OVER ITS VICTIM, SUCKING ITS FILL OF BLOOD.



THAT NIGHT, FRANK WILLIAMS WENT ON A HUNT THROUGH HIS QUIET ILLINOIS TOWN. ARMED WITH A SHARP CRUELLY-Hewn WOODEN STAKE AND AN ANGER WITHIN HIM... A BUTTERFLY HATING ANGER...

I'LL GET THAT VAMPIRE! I'LL GET IT IF I HAVE TO LOOK FOREVER...



HE INCHED FORWARD, HIS HEART POUNDING IN HIS CHEST SO LOUDLY THAT HE WAS SURE THE VAMPIRE COULD HEAR IT TOO. BUT IT WAS HIS CRUNCHING FOOT STEP IN THE SNOW THAT MADE HIS PRESENCE KNOWN...





THE VAMPIRE, WITH ITS BLACK CAPE FLOWING BEHIND, DOOMED THROUGH ALLEYS AND DOWN NARROW WINDING STREETS, SEEMING AT TIMES TO ALMOST FLY. FRANK POUNDED AFTER IT IN BREATHLESS UNRELENTING PURSUIT...

CAN'T LET IT GET AWAY...



SUDDENLY HIS QUARRY DARTED AROUND A CORNER. BY THE TIME FRANK REACHED THE SPOT, THE VAMPIRE HAD VANISHED INTO THIN AIR...

IT MUST HAVE GONE INTO ONE OF THOSE BUILDINGS! IT MUST HAVE GONE...



FRANK TURNED, HIS GLANCE FALLING ON THE SOMBER FAMILIAR STRUCTURE... HAYSON'S FUNERAL HOME... WITH JOAN STILL LYING IN HER COFFIN...

COFFIN OF COURSE! A VAMPIRE SLEEPS IN A COFFIN BY DAY. WHAT BETTER PLACE TO HIDE ONE?



HE CROSSED THE EMPTY DESERTED STREET, TRIED THE DOOR, FOUND IT OPEN. HE PULLED THE COIL OF ROPE HE'D BROUGHT ALONG FROM HIS POCKET, AND ENTERED CAUTIOUSLY...

JOAN TOLD ME ABOUT THE CELLAR, WHERE THEY STORE THINGS AND PREPARE BOOKS. PERHAPS DOWN THERE...



HE MADE HIS WAY ACROSS THE DARK PARLOR, BRUSHING AGAINST JOAN'S COFFIN. THERE WAS A STAIRCASE IN THE REAR. HE STRUCK A MATCH, STARTED DOWN, HIS SHADOW PERFORMING A GROTESQUE DANCE ON THE WALL BEHIND HIM...



CERTAINLY ARE PLenty OF COFFINS DOWN HERE. AND, CHUCK... A BODY...

HE MOVED FROM COFFIN TO COFFIN, PEERING INSIDE, SEARCHING FOR THE TELL-TALE SIGN. AND THEN...

HERE IT IS! THERE'S BLOOD IN THE BOTTOM OF THIS ONE!



SUDDENLY, FRANK BLEW OUT THE MATCH! HE'D HEARD A SOUND...SIT GRINDING ON THE STAIRS ABOVE. HE CONFERED IN THE DARKNESS, LISTENING, WAITING, AS A FIGURE CAME SLOWLY DOWN THE STEPS...



THE FIGURE SLIDED ACROSS THE CELLAR, FRANK LEAPED, WRAPPING THE ROPE AROUND IT WITH LIGHTNING SPEED...

WHAT...WHAT'S GOING ON?? LET ME GO! HEY!

NOW WE'LL SEE WHO YOU ARE, YOU PINK...



FRANK FORCED THE BLENDER, WRAP FIGURE TO ITS KNEES...LASHED ITS HANDS BEHIND ITS BACK...AND FUMBLING FOR A MATCH...

EARL? EARL BOYD?

FRANK? WHY DON'T YOU LET ME KNOW YOU GOT HOME? SAY, IS THIS YOUR IDEA OF A JOKE? O' MOM! UNTIE ME!



YOU'RE THE VAMPIRE, AREN'T YOU, EARL, MY BEST FRIEND... A VAMPIRE? YOU'VE COME BACK HERE FOR YOUR SLEEP, HAVEN'T YOU?

ARE YOU CRAZY? YOU KNOW I WORK HERE AT NIGHT, FRANK?

THERE'S BLOOD ON YOUR MOUTH, EARL! IS IT A VAMPIRE'S BLOOD?

YOU KNOWED ME GOING FOR GOD'S SAKE, FRANK!

WHAT ABOUT THE GUY, EARL... THE GUY IN THE BOTTOM OF THIS COFFIN?

I DON'T KNOW WHAT YOU'RE TALKING ABOUT, FRANK! JOAN'S DEATH MUST HAVE BEEN FOR A GOOD REASON FOR YOU! YOU'RE OUT OF YOUR MIND!



OUT OF MY MIND, AM I? ALL RIGHT? THEN YOU WON'T MIND PROVING YOU'RE NOT THE VAMPIRE! YOU WON'T MIND BEING TIED UP IN THAT COFFIN...

IN THAT COFFIN? NO??

BECAUSE IF YOU ARE THE VAMPIRE, YOU'LL FALL ASLEEP SOME SOMETIME, AND WHEN YOU DO, I'LL BE READY WITH THIS SWORD, SET IN!

FRANK! I KNOW HOW MUCH JOAN MEANT TO YOU. BUT WHY BLAME IT ON ME? I LOVED YOU BOTH! I WAS GOING TO BE YOUR BEST MAN! I...

GET INTO THAT COFFIN AND SHUT UP! IT'S ALMOST SEVEN BLURK DAWN TO BE VERY SOON!



EARL RELAXED. SUDDENLY, HE CLOSED INTO THE COFFIN. FRANK TIED HIM SECURELY AND STARTED UP THE STEPS.

WHERE YOU GOING, FRANK?

UNFRAID? THERE ISN'T A WINDOW IN THIS PLACE. I WANT TO SEE THE SUN RISE...

THAT CALENDAR WILL TELL YOU, FRANK. IT'LL TELL YOU THE EXACT TIME THE SUN RISES.

YOU'RE RIGHT, EARL! LET'S SEE. TODAY IS THE TENTH. THERE IT IS! SUNRISE... 7:15 A.M.

FRANK LOOKED AT HIS WATCH...

THAT'S FIVE MINUTES FROM NOW, EARL! FIVE MINUTES!

YOU'LL SEE! YOU'LL SEE! I'M NOT THE VAMPIRE!

THE MINUTES CRUMBLD BY. FRANK PEERED AT HIS WATCH. THE CAME AND WENT. EARL WAS WIDE AWAKE. 2:30 CAME. FRANK HURLED THE STAKE AWAY IN DISBELIEF...

IF YOU WERE THE VAMPIRE, YOU WOULD HAVE BEEN ASLEEP BY NOW!

BEST I TOLD YOU! AND THE REAL VAMPIRE... THE ONE WHO DOES THIS COFFIN... WAS GOT TEN AWAY! UNTIL ME!

FRANK UNTIED EARL. EARL GRINNED AT HIM... A STRANGE GRIN... AN EVIL, LEERING GRIN.

YOU'VE BEEN IN NEW YORK, HAVEN'T YOU, FRANK?

Y-YEAH! I FLEW BACK THIS AFTERNOON... WHEN I GOT HARRY TELEGRAM! TOOK THE FLEO PLANE OUT OF... OUT OF...

EARL'S LEERING GRIN CHANGED AS HE SPRANG. FRANKS ERUPTED FROM BEHIND HIS CHARKING LIPS. FRANK SCREAMED...

MY GOD! HOW STUPID OF ME! IT LINGS IS AN HOUR BEHIND NEW YORK!

THAT'S RIGHT, FRANK! YOU FORGOT TO CHANGE YOUR WATCH. I'VE GOT PLENTY OF TIME TILL SUNRISE! ANOTHER HALF-HOUR! ENOUGH TO DRINK MY FILL... AGAIN!

HEY, HEY! NOW ISN'T THAT A BLOODY SHAME, ROBERT? JUST BECAUSE FRANK'S WATCH WAS A LITTLE FAST HIS TIME RAN OUT. YOU MIGHT SAY FRANK CAME TO A DEAD STOP! WELL, YOU'LL COME TO A DEAD STOP WHEN YOU SEE THE STUFF YOU GET WHEN YOU JOIN THE E. C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB.

SEE THE AD FOLLOWING THE TEXT FOLLOWING THIS YEAR FOR INFO. I'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG. THE VAULT OF HORROR! 'BYE NOW!

# ON ICE!



Plimpton fingered the wad of bills as he slipped through the shattered basement window. Stepping carefully over the shards of glass, he slipped his cigarette lighter from his pocket and glanced around the murky room. There was enough scrap paper scattered on the floor to make his job a snap. He picked up a crumpled wad of paper: printed on it was the name of the firm whose plant he was about to destroy by arson. He shrugged his shoulders and spun the flywheel of his lighter, if the owner of Freeze-Out Frozen Food Lockers wanted to pay a bundle to have the joint go up in smoke, who was Plimpton to argue?

A minute later he had emptied his tiny cans of lighter fluid in the right places. A sprinkle of the liquid here... a dribble of it there... and the scattered debris was primed for the match. Wadding the saturated paper under a wooden desk that would be sure to catch fire rapidly, he checked the minute details which would make this job a complete success. Several trails of tightly twisted paper radiated out from the doomed desk, one leading to a wooden filing cabinet, another crossed the floor to stacks of paper-packaging in which foods to be consigned to the big freezers were wrapped. One minute for the critical wad of fluid-soaked paper to catch fire, and the whole dump would be a seething inferno. He had just one minute in which to scramble out through the shattered basement window... he could do it easily. There was no question in his mind: this job was as good as on ice!

Plimpton smiled to himself, thinking of the wad of bills in his pocket... and the still greater amount waiting for him when he rendezvoused with Mr. Freeze-Out Frozen Food Lockers. Then, suddenly, there was the sound of a door opening some where behind him.

In one convulsive moment Plimpton darted across the room, swung open the ponderous door of a huge enameled chest and hurled himself into the big freezer. He flamed himself against sharp-cornered food cartons crammed into the huge refrigerator, leaning the lid close almost completely as a flashlight probed toward him out of the darkness. Through the scant inch between the freezer and the lid, he saw the old watchman advancing toward him slowly. Plimpton tensed to leap free of the box, but before he could move, the heavy lid had been slammed shut from the outside. The lock on the freezer lid snapped audibly.

Plimpton's fingers scratched frantically at the door, but the big chest was sealed tight. He screamed in anguish and pounded on the ice-crusted inner surface... already the numbing cold was strangling the breath in his lungs. His stiff fingers whirled the flywheel of the lighter and a bluish flame leaps up. The heat did little to dispell the awful cold.

Two minutes passed... three... then the flame flickered and died. Plimpton tried to hammer on the frosted metal, but his arms were useless stumps... and deep inside his agonized body a core of icy fire went pulsating shocks along every nerve and fiber.

In a frenzy he struggled to move, but his body was held rigidly now by the chill embrace of the frozen packages. He opened his mouth to scream, but his spittle became a tracery of gagging ice over his cracked lips. His tongue began to swell and turn blue-purple... the color of a flame that, moments before, was poised to touch off a searing fire. He moaned once, and then became merely another consignment of quick-frozen meat.



# YOU, TOO, CAN MEET NEW FRIENDS! JOIN THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!

SEND FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP KIT TODAY. RECEIVE A FULL-COLOR 7½ X 10½ ILLUMINATED CERTIFICATE, A STURDY WALLET IDENTIFICATION CARD, A SHAZZIE EMBROIDERED SHOULDER PATCH, AND A STUNNING ANTIQUE BRONZE-FINISH BAS-RELIEF PIN.

FOR AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IT IN, TOGETHER WITH 15¢ IF FIVE OR MORE OF YOU WISH TO JOIN AS AN AUTHORIZED CHAPTER. ENCLOSE EACH MEMBER'S NAME AND ADDRESS ALONG WITH 35¢ FOR EACH NAME, AND INDICATE THE NAME OF THE ELECTED CHAPTER PRESIDENT. WE WILL NOTIFY EACH PRESIDENT OF HIS CHAPTER NUMBER. EACH MEMBER, CHAPTER OR INDIVIDUAL, WILL RECEIVE HIS KIT DIRECTLY... BY RETURN MAIL!

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 706  
225 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK, 12, N.Y.

Here's my two bits! I want the things and stuff like the kid's wearing! I want to meet new friends like the kid's meeting! I'm a fan-addict! I'm mad!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_

ZONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Well, isn't it amazing how additions to the EC HORROR HIT PARADE keep pouring in from you clever little creeps. Some of 'em are gittin' pretty scary though... let's look at The following selections were suggested by: Leonard Blumwood, Steve Falls, S. D., Billy Wilson, Queens Village, L. I.; Pete and Betty Anzari, Los Vegas, N. M.; Walter Legerstadt, Corvallis, N. Y.; Arnold Schaefer and Judy Knight, Detroit, Mich.; and Donna C. Thompson, Elgin Field, Ill.

IN SEAMS I STITCH YOUR HAND, MADAM  
I COME FROM ALABAMA WITH A HANSHIE  
ON MY KNEE  
GORGIN ON MY MIND  
ON KENNY GRIEVE, SWEET JENNY GRIEVE  
I'M AGHIN TO BLIND YOU  
TRYING WITH A SCALPEL  
SAY, SEE BONES!  
IF I KNEW YOU WERE COMING, I'D A  
MILKED A SNAKE  
I LOATHE YOU A BUNDEL AND A PECK  
GAND A HOPE AROUND YOUR NECK  
WHILE DRUGGLING IN THE DARK, ONE DAY  
TILL MY VAULES AGAIN WITH GOO  
TRAIN ON THE ROOF  
THE THIRD MAN SCREAM  
OH, MAINED PAPA  
IT WOULD TAKE MORE THAN TO HACE UP  
WILD COMPOSES  
CARRY MY SACE TO OLE VIRGINIA  
FRANCING WITH SPEARS IN MY EYES

And from E. Nelson Bradwell of Oklahoma City, we received the following LURID LYNCS to THE GHOUL THAT'S HARRY.

The ghoul that I marry will have to be  
As dismal and grey as a mortuary  
The ghoul I call my own  
Would be greatly improved if she used some  
cologne  
Her claws will be sharpened, and in her hair  
See I wear a great eyebeads (she's not all  
there!)  
Stand of little, I'll be stiller  
Next to her, and I'm sure I'll be better.  
A couple six can carry  
The ghoul that I marry must be

Michael Fitzgerald of S.F.C. and Gordon Lewis, Jr. of Atlanta, Ga. suggest the following PUTRID PRO-GRONES

I BLEED THREE WIVES  
GHOST OF THE TOWN  
THE EDGE FISHED HER BLOW  
EAT THE CLOCK  
GREATEST FRIGHS OF THE MORTUARY  
TROUBLE OR NOTHING  
FLAYHOUSE OF SCARS  
HUNG DR. MARGIE

Clay Kimball of Draper, N. C. and Sally Anne Shaw of Houston, Tx suggest the following EVIL, ENTER-TAINERS

TERESA SIWER  
MUSTY VAPOR  
SID SQUEEZE  
IMMOGNE CHOKIES

Stanford Grossman of Detroit, Mich. suggests a new dept.

CRUDDY COMICS  
JOGS AND MAGGOTS  
BRINGING UP BLOOMER  
TIM TYLER'S MOGE  
STEVE NODD HER  
MICKY'S PERNED  
ERRY'S WAGE  
HER HEART AND JULIE'S BONES

The LURID LITERATURE following was donated by Doug Stewart of:

YOM'S NUMS  
MUMFEL'S STILL SKINNED  
THE EMPHORE'S NEW GLOTE  
THE THREE MUSKET'S EARS  
UNCLE YOM'S STASSEN  
AROUND THE WORLD IN EIGHT SLAYS  
MY DEAR SLAYED HER  
THE LADY ON THE STAKE

PERVERTED POETRY by Cecile Ashlett of Baltimore, Md.

When I was buried at sweet sixteen  
Ghouls came to my funeral, it seemed.  
They said they were sorry that I was dead.  
And one of them began to march on my head  
They said I was pretty and very sweet!  
And another began to march on my feet.  
They said I was nice, with money young charms  
And then, they began to march on my arms  
They said they were sorry I'd had to depart  
Then someone reached in and tore out my heart.  
 Luckily I awoke from this terrible dream  
But then I really began to scream  
For there in my room sitting on stools  
Was my mother, my father and six other ghouls!

Just enough room for a hint:

Dear Grossman,

In case you don't know, American magz have all more copies than local ones. And among the comic books I C sells fastest, according to the owner of my favorite stand. They are to comic book creeps what Marilyn Monroe is to movie maniacs

Tony Abney  
Memphis, T.N.

Memphis, where the envelopes come from!

Comes to this: I-D magz! THREE DIMENSIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF FEARFUL, amazing gothic truly... and THREE DIMENSIONAL EC CLASSICS! (60 each... or two for \$100 just mail in the magz! Sub- scriptions to this mag... one that'll night creep! Address for P.D. orders, sub orders, back-on-type orders, or post please send to:

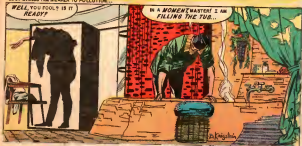
The Crypt-Keeper  
Room 706, Dept. 42  
215 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

**THIS YARN IS DRIPPING WITH  
SWEET AND CLEAN HORROR...**

# THE BATH



MY MASTER IS A VERY STRANGE MAN. AT TIMES HE IS LIKE A WILD ANIMAL, SO CRAZED IS HE WITH HIS LUST FOR SILVER. AND AT OTHER TIMES, HE IS ALMOST LIKE AN OLD WOMAN, SO DEVOTED IS HE TO HIS PERSONAL CLEANLINESS. HE BATHES CONSTANTLY, AS IF HE WERE ABLE TO SCRUB HIS EVIL DEEDS AWAY WITH FOAMING BATH SOAPS AND SCENTED SALTS. LISTEN TO HIM, NOW... SCREAMING AT ME! SUCH CARELESSNESS! SUCH IMPATIENCE! AS IF EACH MOMENT LOST BRINGS HIM NEARER TO POLLUTION...



WELL, YOU FOOL? IS IT  
READY?

IN A MOMENT, MASTER! I AM  
FILLING THE TUB...

MY MASTER IS BEHON FIDRO YODORA. HERE, ON HIS PLANTATION IN THE MATO JUNGLE, HE IS ABSOLUTELY KING AND I, ... I AM HIS MAN-SERVANT. I HAVE BEEN HIS MAN-SERVANT FOR MANY YEARS. I HAVE SEEN AND HEARD MANY THINGS...

MY NAME IS RADU, YENDOTA. IT IS I WHO UNDOESSES BEHON YODORA. IT IS I WHO PREPARES HIS BATH. IT IS I WHO PERFUMES THE WATER AND SCRUBS HIS BACK AND WASHES HIS EVILNESS AWAY...



NOT TOO HOT... NOT TOO  
COLD, RADU? IT MUST BE  
EXACTLY RIGHT. HURRY,  
YOU FOOL!

THE WATER IS JUST  
RIGHT, MASTER...  
AND THE TUB IS  
ALMOST FILLED...

WELL, DON'T MAKE CERTAIN THAT  
YOU HAVE DRAWN THE SHUTTERS  
AND CLOSED THE DOORS. I DO  
NOT WISH TO CATCH A DRAFT!

YES, MASTER! AND  
SHALL I ALSO  
SPRINKLE A FEW  
GRAINS FROM THIS  
RECENTLY ARRIVED  
CAN OF BATH SALTS  
INTO YOUR TUB?

SEÑOR TOMOSA NEED NOT ANSWER MY QUESTION. I ALREADY KNOW WHAT HIS ANSWER WILL BE. SEÑOR TOMOSA LOVES HIS BATH-SALTS AND HIS GEMDORALS AND HIS PERFUMES. TO TRY A NEW ONE IS ALMOST A NECESSITY. DO I NOT WRITE EACH WEEK FOR NEW BATH PRODUCTS TO BE SENT FROM THE COAST? BUT I WAIT FOR HIS EXPECTED ANSWER...

AND AS I OPEN THE LID OF THE CAN, I THINK BACK OVER THE MANY YEARS I HAVE SPENT WITH THE GREAT SEÑOR BATHING. LET ME SAY, IS NOT HIS ONLY PLEASURE. THERE ARE MANY OTHERS. TAKE, FOR EXAMPLE, THAT DAY SO LONG AGO...



OF COURSE, STUPID! WHY DO YOU ALWAYS BOTHER ME WITH SUCH QUESTIONS? IS IT LAVENDER OR PINE?

A NEW MENTURE, MASTER. IT WILL CLEANSER YOU AS YOU HAVE NEVER BEEN CLEANSER BEFORE.



THOSE LAST WRETCHES ARE HOLDING BACK PRODUCTION WHY CAN'T THEY WORK FASTER? RAOUL! STAY NEAR ME WITH THAT PAN! BATH THIS SOON! IT WILL MAKE ME SWEAT WHEN I BATH THEM...

YES, MASTER!

HOW HAPPY HE WAS WHEN THE NATIVES SUBMITTED TO HIS WIFE STING. AND NOW THEY OBEY AND MOANED IN MISERY. SEÑOR TOMOSA LOVED HIS SILVER MINE, HIS PLEASURE AND NO THE WEALTH THEY BRING HIM. BUT MOST OF ALL, HE LOVES TO BATH.

AND I, HIS FAITHFUL SERVANT, WOULD BE AT HIS SIDE, READY TO DO HIS BIDDING...

WORK HARDER, YOU DOGS! SHOW SOME RESPECT FOR MY AUTHORITY. WORK HARDER OR YOU'LL GET NOTHING BUT BREAD AND WATER TO EAT!

FILTHY CARNOR! THEY'VE MADE ME EXERT MYSELF. OOOO, RAOUL! THE ANTISEPTIC SPARK! I DO NOT WANT TO DEVELOP A FEVER.

YES, MASTER. AND I WILL PREPARE YOUR BATH AT ONCE!



I KNOW THAT HE FELT POLLUTED AND DEFILED UNTIL HE COULD CLEANSER HIMSELF OF THE AURA OF HIS CONTACT WITH HIS WORKERS.

I WILL TRY THE ROUGH POWEL TODAY, RAOUL. IT WILL CIRCULATE MY BLOOD AND ELIMINATE ANY DIRT PARTICLES THAT MAY HAVE REMAINED IN MY PORES. THOSE... FILTHY WRETCHES!

YOU ARE DISPLEASED ABOUT SOMETHING, MASTER?



FOR I KNEW THAT SEÑOR TOMOSA ALWAYS INSISTED UPON BATHING AFTER ONE OF THOSE DAILY CONTACTS WITH THE NATIVES...

AA-AAA! JJJJJJ. JOOOO! THE VERY CHAVALING DIRT FROM THOSE CREATURES HAS BEEN WASHED DOWN THE DRAIN.

WILL YOU WANT THE ROUGH POWEL OR THE SMOOTH MASTER?



ES LA HEROSA RAOUL! I WILL REMAIN A POOR MAN AT THE RATE THOSE LAST DEVILS WORK MY MINE. STARTING TOMORROW, I WILL START A NEW POLICY WITH THOSE BROTHERS! EACH MAN MUST OBEY HIS MIGHTY SILVER ORE. OR HE WILL BE LASHED SPREAD-EAGLED IN THE SUR FOR TWO DAYS WITH NO FOOD OR WATER.





YES, EL SEÑOR TOSOSA WAS A MUCH RESPECTED MAN. HAD HE NOT COME HERE TO THE **MATTO ARRABO** AND WORKED HIS SILVER MINE WITH THE HELP OF THE NATIVES? HAD HE NOT PROMISED TO TREAT THEM FAIRLY IF THEY WOULD WORK FOR HIM? HAD HE NOT BUILT A MARVELOUS PLAYACHOFF AND SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH GOLD AND JEWELS AND OTHER TREASURES? HAD HE NOT DONE ALL THESE THINGS? HAD HE NOT DONE THE **OTHER** THINGS TOO...



WE CANNOT MOAN ANY HARDER THAN WE ARE **WORKING**, MASTER. WE DO NOT GET ENOUGH **FOOD**. OUR STOMACHS **BROWL**, AND WE SLOWLY **FIND**, OUR FAMILIES **STARVE**. FOR FAVOR, MASTER.

YOU DARE **DEFILE** ME WITH YOUR **TOUGH SET BACK**, YOU **POOR** **BACK**!

HAD HE NOT BEATEN AND KICKED AND CURSED AND THREATENED THE NATIVES INTO SUBMISSIONS...

AND HERE'S MY **ANSWER**! TAKE...**GOOF**! THIS BACK TO YOUR WORM-INFESTED BUTS. TELL THEM...**GOOF**! GET BY ORDERS OF **DUE**!

**GOOF WWWW**



BUT ALWAYS AFTER THESE DISGUSTING EXPERIENCES...THREE CONTACTS WITH THE NATIVES...MY MASTER WOULD TAKE HIS BATH. FOR THAT SEEMED TO BE THE ONLY THING THAT WOULD CALM HIM AND PUT HIM INTO A GOOD HUMOR AGAIN.

IF I CATCH ANYTHING FROM THAT MISERABLE TOAD, I'LL HAVE HIM **HACKED TO DEATH**!

THE WATER IS **NOT**, MASTER!



THE WATER WOULD LAKE HIM GENTLY, SMELLING OF SOAP AND PERFUMES AND BATH SALTS...

AH! **GOOF**! THE **WATER**, THE **BETTER**! I MUST CLEAN THEIR **SLIME** FROM ME, **RAH!** I MUST REMOVE THEIR **POLLUTION**!



AND AFTERWARD, WHEN HE WOULD DRESS...

MY FACE LOOKS **GOOD** TODAY, **SHARADU**...SO SMOOTH AND WHITE AND **CLEAN**!

YES, MASTER!



THEN AND ONLY THEN, WHEN HE FELT THAT HIS BODY HAD BEEN PURGED OF ANY CONTAMINATION, WOULD SEÑOR TOSOSA BE IN HIGH SPIRITS. AND MANY WERE THE NIGHTS I WOULD STARE AND WATCH HIM COUNT HIS GOLD AND CHECK HIS DAY'S PRODUCTION...

THE **VENTILATORS** AND **AIR PURIFIERS** ARE WORKING, MASTER!



**GOOF**! **GOOF**! I... WHAT IS **THIS**? ONLY **THREE TONS** OF **SILVER** **ONE** **DUB** TODAY! I'M BEING **CHEATED**!

ONLY **THREE TONS** OF **DRE**? I'LL TEACH THEM TO **CHEAT**! **MEP** I'VE BEEN **LENIENT** **LONG ENOUGH**! FROM NOW ON I'LL **SHOW** THEM THAT I **MEAN**! WHAT I **SAID**! FROM NOW ON I'LL **DRIVE** THEM AS THEY'VE NEVER BEEN **DRIVEN** BEFORE!



AND WHEN MY MASTER WAS ANGRY LIKE THAT, I KNEW THAT MY DUTIES WOULD BE HEAVY AND TRYING. THAT THERE WOULD BE MANY MORE BATHS.

YOU'LL ALL WORK HARDER AND LONGER! I'M INCREASING YOUR HOURS TO MAKE YOU REALIZE THAT MY ORDERS ARE NOT MERELY JOLE WORDS... THAT YOU...

COUSIN COUGH?



BUT WORST OF ALL WERE THE DAYS WHEN THE UNEXPECTED HAPPENED.

YOU COUGHED? YOU FILTHY DOG! YOU SPREWED YOUR DIRTY GERMS UPON ME. I'LL FIX YOU! GUARDS! GUARDS!

NO, MASTER! I COULDN'T HELP IT! HERE, FOR DIES!



SEÑOR TOBOSA WOULD SHRINK FOR HIS GUARDS AND THEY WOULD CLOSE IN ON THE POOR SICK NATIVE WHO DARED INSULT HIM.

TAKE HIM AWAY! SEW HIS MOUTH SHUT! TORTURE HIM! KILL HIM!

NO! NO! YAAAYYY!!!



ON THOSE DAYS, ALL WOULD FEEL HIS WRATH. IT WAS BEST TO OBEY HIM INSTANTLY OR SUFFER DRAKE CONSEQUENCES.

SPRINT THE ROOM! BRING ME MY METAL VAPORIZER! DRAW MY BATH! QUICKLY, RAQUEL! IF I COME DOWN WITH A COLD...

YES, MASTER!



I REMEMBER THE DAY EL SEÑOR RAISED THE NEARBY NATIVE VILLAGE FOR MORE WORKERS...

NO! PLEASE! DON'T TAKE OUR SON AWAY! HE IS TOO WEAK... TOO YOUNG! HE WILL NOT STAND THE STRAIN! WE NEED OF YOU, TAKE US, BUT...

STAND BACK, YOU OLD FOOL! SHE IS CAPABLE OF OUR-SING! HE WILL COME WITH US...



FOR AFTER THAT, THINGS WERE NOT THE SAME. THE BOY INFURIATED EL SEÑOR. OFTEN, UNDER THE HOT, BLAZING SUN, WHEN THE OTHER FORCED LABORERS STAGGERED BACK AND FORTH FROM THE MINE, SCARCELY ABLE TO STAND, SEÑOR TOBOSA WOULD PICK ON THE BOY.

WORK, I SAID! GET BACK ON YOUR FEET, SCUM! DO AS I SAY! YOUR LIFE IS MINE! BACK ON YOUR FEET!



AND THEN HE WOULD COME PANTING AT ME, ABHORRED BY HIS EXPERIENCE.

I AM CLUTED WITH TREACHEROUS WORKERS AND 'WEAKLING BOYS! BASTA! ENOUGH! MY ARMS ARE WEARY FROM BEATING THEM. I FEEL FILTHY FROM BEING NEAR THEM. RAQUEL! MY BATH...



YES, I REMEMBER IT WELL... ALL OF IT. THE BOY GREW WEAKER AND WEAKER UNDER THE CHLASHES OF MY MASTER'S ANGRY BEATINGS, FINALLY COLLAPSING... TODAY.

I REMEMBER HOW THE BOY'S PARENTS RUSHED FROM THEIR STATIONS TO THEIR DEAD SON'S SIDE.

HE... HE IS DEAD, MASTER!

BAH! HE WAS LIKE A JOY! I SHALL HAVE TO FIND WORKERS WITH MORE STAMINA!

YOU HAVE DONE THIS TO OUR SON, YOU FAT PORCEN! PIG! YOU HAVE TAKEN AWAY... OUR OVERSIGHT!

YOU ARE EVIL! I WOULD LIKE TO SQUEEZE YOUR FAT OILY NECK!

KEEP AWAY!



HOW THEY FOOLISHLY ATTACKED MY MASTER.

SCRATCH HIS PIG EYES OUT, JAHN! LET HIM FEEL THE PAIN AND MISERY THAT PLAGUES OUR PEOPLE!

SWINE! MURDERING SWINE!

KEEP AWAY! KEEP... I'M CONTAMINATED! TAKE YOUR SLIMY HANDS OFF... ME.



AND HOW THEY EACH FELT THE STINGING BULLETS FROM EL SEÑOR'S CLEANING REVOLVER.



I REMEMBER HOW HE STOOD OVER THEM, SHUDDERING IN REVULSION...

I'LL TEACH YOU TO VIOLATE BY PERSON... TO DARE TOUCH ME WITH YOUR GRABBY HANDS! I'LL LET YOUR CARCASSES ROT IN THE SUN.



...HOW HE SCREAMED AT THE OTHERS.

NOW GET BACK TO WORK, YOU SWINE! OR YOU'LL ALL ROT IN THE SUN WITH THEM!



HOW HE CAME IN PANTING.

MY BATH, MAJAL! GET MY BATH READY! I MUST CLEANSE MYSELF OF THEIR FILTH...

YES... MASTER.



SO I OPEN THE LID OF THE CAN AND I EMPTY ITS CONTENTS INTO MY MASTER'S BATH. IT IS A BIG CAN BUT HE DOES NOT SEE ME DO THIS...



YOUR BATH IS READY, MASTER!

ERT OH! GOOD! WHAT TOOK YOU SO LONG, RADUL? WHERE DID YOU GO WHILE I WAS DROWESSING?

I LEAD MY MASTER TO THE TUB AS I HAVE DONE SO OFTEN...



I WENT TO GET THE NEW BATH PREPARATION, MASTER!

OH! REST! IT'LL CLEANSER ME AS I HAVE NEVER BEEN CLEANSERED BEFORE YOU SAID?

THE BOARDS CRACK UNDER MY FAT MASTER'S WEIGHT AS I HELP HIM INTO THE TUB.



GOOD! I FEEL POSITIVELY FILTHY AFTER ALL THOSE DEATHS... THEIR DIRTY BLOOD SPATTERING UPON ME...

YOU WILL BE CLEANSERD, MASTER!

I LISTEN TO HIS SCREAMS OF PAIN AS HE SINKS INTO THE SWIRLING AND BOILING BATH WATER...



RADUL! MY GOD! RADUL! YAAEEEEEEAGGG...

YOU WILL BE CLEANSERD TO THE BONE, MASTER!

I LISTEN TO MY MASTER SCREAM, JUST AS THE BOY BEAT TO DEATH SCREAMED, AND THE BOY'S PARENTS HE SHOT TO DEATH SCREAMED, FOR MY MASTER'S BATH HAS BEEN FILLED WITH A CANFUL OF THE TERRIBLE, FRY, SAVAGE FLESH-EATING, PIRAHANA FISH OF THE MATTO GROSSO...



AAAAAAAEEEEEEEEEE...

THE SILVERY PIRAHANA... RIPPING, TEARING, STRIPPING MY MASTER'S FAT FLABBY FLESH FROM HIS BONES... CLEANSING HIM AS HE HAS NEVER BEEN CLEANSERED BEFORE... AVENGING THE BOY... AND HIS PARENTS, WHO WERE ALSO MY PARENTS.



END

# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEL, HEL! HOBBLE INTO 'THE HAVEN OF FEAR,' NIGHTS, AND YOUR SHIVER-CHEF, YOUR SLOP-SERVER, YOUR HOSTESS-IN-HEAVEN, THE OLD WITCH, WILL FEED YOU FOUL FARE FROM HER GRUDGY CAULDRON. YER, IT'S BE' HEATH, READY TO WIND UP LK'S MASH WITH ANOTHER FRY ITEM FROM MY HORROR MENU, SO OPEN YOUR BAWNY LITTLE MOUTHS AND I'LL POP IN THE PUTRID POT-PROSE I CALL...

## HOODWINKED!

THE AIR IS STEPPING IN THE OLD HOUSE... STINKING OF WHISKEY AND MOONING AND GUST AND SWEAT, THE SHADY FURNITURE, USUALLY SO ORDERLY, SHOWS SIGNS OF THE STRUGGLE THAT HAS TAKEN PLACE. LEON LETS HIS GAZE WANDER ABOUT THE ROOM... STOMPS AT THE STAINED, AGED WALLPAPER WITH THE FADED, BICE-BOY PATTERN... THE FOUR BAD WALLS... AS IF THEY MIGHT TELL HIM WHAT THEY'VE WITNESSED BEFORE HE'D GOTTEN HOME. HE GLANCES QUICKLY INTO THE BATHROOM ACROSS THE HALL, STUTTERING WHAT LIES THERE ON THE HARD COLD FLOOR. THE GORSE RISES IN HIS THROAT AND SPICKS IN IT, HIS EYES DART TO HIS BROTHER... TO CHET'S TORN SHIRT AND THE SCORCHES. CHET LOOKS UP AT LEON, TRYING TO READ WHAT IS IN HIS EYES, BUT THEY TELL HIM NOTHING. FINALLY CHET SCREAMS...



AREN'T YOU GOING TO FELL AT ME, LEON? AREN'T YOU GOING TO GET MAD? DON'T JUST STAND THERE! SAY SOMETHING!



LEON'S FACE IS COLO, HIS MOUTH IS A SPENT TIGHT LINE. CHET SHAKES... LODGING DOWN AT THE FLOOR...

WHY DON'T YOU HIT ME, LEON? WHY DON'T YOU BEAT ME TO A BLOODY PULP? WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? WHAT ARE YOU THINKING ABOUT?

I'M THINKING ABOUT HOW THIS WHOLE CRAZY THING GOT STARTED. I'M THINKING ABOUT WHAT A FOOL I WAS... TWENTY YEARS AGO...



TWENTY YEARS AGO, WHEN MA WAS UPSTAIRS, LIVING IN HER BED, SLEEPING FOR BREATH...

AND SHE MADE ME PROMISE...  
HE'S A BABY, LEON! TAKE CARE OF HIM! YOU'LL BE... ALL ALONE... JUST THE TWO... OF... YOU, PROMISE ME...

MAMA... MOM... MAMA?

I PROMISE, MA! I'LL LOOK AFTER CHET. I'LL KEEP HIM WITH ME... I'LL WORK FOR HIM... I'LL... I'LL...

MA NEVER HEARD THAT PROMISE, CHET? I MADE IT, BUT IT FELL ON DEAF EARS. SHE WAS DEAD...

MOM... MOM... SPEAK TO ME...  
CHET'S... BOB... SOMETHING...



YOU DON'T REMEMBER IT VERY WELL, DO YOU, CHET?... THE DAY MA DIED? WELL... I REMEMBER IT. I REMEMBER IT TO CLEARLY! I MADE A PROMISE, CHET! MA! I KEPT IT! THAT'S THE KIND OF GUY I AM! A PUSHOVER! YOU KNEW IT, TOO...

LEON! I...  
"REMEMBER THE BICYCLE, CHET? REMEMBER HOW YOU SAW IT IN THE WINDOW AND BEGGED ME FOR IT? YEARS! YOU KNEW I WAS A PUSHOVER! I DOO ALOT OF OVERTIME TO GET THAT BIKE FOR YOU! IT WAS THE BEST... IMPORTED FROM ENGLAND..."



"REMEMBER THE BIKE, CHET? IT WAS A BIG THING TO YOU, BUT THE THRILL DIDN'T LAST LONG, DID IT? JERRY HODSON BOUGHT HIMSELF A SECOND-HAND CONVERTIBLE AND YOUR FAVORITE HUNG OUT..."

YOU MIGHT AS WELL HAVE STAYED HOME FROM SCHOOL THAT DAY... THE NEW TOY YOU DREAMED ABOUT A JALOPY OF YOUR OWN, AND HAVING DATES, AND PARTIES. YOU WERE ALL SET FOR ME WHEN I CAME HOME FROM WORK THAT NIGHT, WEREN'T YOU? "



SAY, IT'S THE NUTS, JERRY! WHAT'S THIS JOY, MAN? GET YOU BACK?

ONE-TWENTY... WITH NEW BEAR COVERS, CHET. I'M FELLOW YOU, THE CHICKS IN SCHOOL. SO NUTS OVER A JALOP. I JUST RAISE MY EYEBROWS AND IN THEY JUMP!

TWO HUNDRED DUCKS! THAT'S A LOT OF MORE, CHET! CAN'T YOU MAKE THE BIKE DO FOR ANOTHER YEAR?

I SOLD THE BIKE, LEON... FOR TWENTY DUCKS!

**TWENTY DUCKS!**  
FOR PETE'S SAKE,  
CHET! I PAID SIXTY-  
TWO FIFTY FOR  
THAT RENT A COUPLE  
OF MONTHS AGO!

DID YOU EVER TRY TO SELL A  
SECOND HAND BIKIE? THAT'S  
ALL THEY'RE WORTH! THE  
TWENTY WILL GO TOWARDS  
A DOWN PAYMENT ON THE  
CAR, LEON. ALL THE GUYS  
AT SCHOOL ARE GETTING  
CARS...

"YEAH, YOU KNEW ME, CHET!" YOU KNEW I WAS A  
PUSHOVER! YOU KNEW I'D ASK A LITTLE, BUT THAT  
IT'S FINALLY GIVE IN. REMEMBER HOW SHOCKED I WAS AT  
THE PRICE OF THE CAR YOU'D PICKED OUT...

FIVE  
HUNDRED  
DOLLARS!  
BUT, CHET!  
YOU SAID...

LOOK AT IT THIS WAY,  
MR. DOYLE! A CAR LIKE  
THIS STANDS UP  
YOU SAVE ON  
REPAIRS...

IT'S TOO MUCH,  
LEON! I CAN'T  
DOWN PAYMENT  
BUT I THOUGHT  
IT WAS THE PRICE

"THAT'S THE WAY I WAS, HUH, CHET? I ALWAYS  
ENDED UP SPENDING MORE BECAUSE YOU HAD TO  
HAVE THE BEST..."

IT WON'T BE TOO BAD  
FIFTEEN MONTHS TO PAY  
OFF THE BALANCE. LET'S  
SEE, THAT'S THREE HUNDRED  
DIVIDED BY FIFTEEN...  
PLUS INTEREST...

"I'LL GET A JOB  
AFTER SCHOOL,  
LEON. I'LL BUY  
THE CAR, AND  
YOU CAN USE  
THE CAR!"

"REMEMBER FOUR PROMISE, CHET? YOU NEVER DID KEEP IT.  
YOU NEVER DID FIND THAT AFTER-SCHOOL JOB - YOU NEVER  
EVER LOOKED. AND I LEARNED THAT A CAR CAN BE AN  
EXPENSIVE PROPOSITION..."

"WHAT? BUT I JUST  
SAVE YOU THREE HUNDRED  
YESTERDAY!"

THAT WAS FOR GAS AND OIL!  
I CAN'T GO ON A DATE WITHOUT A  
CENT IN MY POCKET, CAN I?

"I CAN'T KEEP UP WITH  
YOU, CHET! NEW CLOTHES!  
FORES! SPECIAL HOB  
GAPST DATES! CAN'T..."

THANKS,  
LEON!  
I'LL SEE  
YOU IN  
THE  
MORNING!

CHET LISTENS UNCOMFORTABLY AS HIS  
BROTHER LEON'S VOICE DRONES ON...

THAT CAR MUST'VE COST ME  
A THOUSAND DOLLARS ALL  
TOLD BY THE TIME I  
PAID IT OFF. BUT IT  
WAS JUST THE TWO  
OF US THEN, AND IT  
DON'T MATTER  
THAT I WASN'T  
SAVING A DIME...

IT  
WAS  
8000  
WHEN  
THERE  
WERE  
ONLY  
TWO  
OF US...

IT DIDN'T MATTER TILL I  
MET CLAIRE! THREE  
YEARS AGO, IT WASN'T  
DOING SEEM THAT  
LONG! YOU WERE JUST  
AT COLLEGE, THEN!  
YOU'D WANTED TO  
STUDY LAW!

I'LL  
DO  
BACH,  
LEON!  
I'LL...



LEON LOOKS AWAY FROM THE BATH-ROOM WITH ITS GOLD TILE FLOOR AND THE GOLD BODY LYING THERE. HE LOOKS AT HIS BROTHER, AND A SHADOW DARKENS HIS FACE...

GO BACK? WOULDN'T IT BE GREAT IF WE COULD ALL GO BACK, YOU AND CLARE AND ME?

LEON, I COULDN'T HELP WHAT HAPPENED!



"SHE WAS TWENTY THREE WHEN I MET HER... SIX YEARS YOUNGER THAN I. IF EVER THERE WERE TWO PEOPLE THAT WERE MADE FOR EACH OTHER, IT WAS CLARE AND ME..."

SO YOU CAN IMAGINE HOW GOOD I FELT WHEN I GOT THAT RAISE. IT MEANT CHET COULD GO TO COLLEGE.

HE MUST BE A WONDER-FUL BOY FOR YOU TO BE SO GOOD TO HIM!



'CLARE WAS LIKE THAT, CHET? NO MATTER WHAT SHE MAY HAVE THOUGHT, SHE NEVER ONCE SUGGESTED THAT I WAS SPOILING YOU...'

WELL, I'VE HAD TO BE BOTH FATHER AND MOTHER TO HER, CLARE. IF I DON'T SEE TO IT HE GOT A BREAK, WHO WOULD?

YOU'RE A WONDERFUL PERSON, LEON!



'CLARE WAS SATISFIED JUST WALKING WITH ME. SHE KNEW I COULDN'T AFFORD TO TAKE HER OUT, WITH YOU IN COLLEGE...'

IT WAS SOUND FUNNY FROM ABOUT MY AGE, BUT YOU'RE THE FIRST GIRL I'VE... ER... DONE WITH. GUESS I'VE BEEN TOO BUSY.

I ONLY WENT WITH ONE OTHER MAN, LEON. HE TRIED TO GET FRESH WITH ME SO I STOPPED SEEING HIM...



'CLARE WAS A GOOD GIRL, CHET. THAT'S THE WAY I WANTED HER TO STAY. REMEMBER WHEN YOU MET HER? YOU'D COME HOME FROM COLLEGE FOR THE SUMMER VACATION...'

WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME? LEON... FINALLY... BUT HIMSELF A GIRL? WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME.

CLARE IS MAKING SOMETHING SPECIAL TO CELEBRATE YOUR ANNIVERSARY, CHET? SHE CAN REALLY COOK? HA! YOU'LL SEE...



'WHILE CLARE WAS OUT IN THE KITCHEN, HE TOLD YOU ABOUT HER... HOW WE SAW EACH OTHER EVERY NIGHT... HOW SHE CAME TO THE HOUSE THREE OR THREE TIMES A WEEK TO COOK FOR ME. ONLY YOU... YOU STARTED IMAGINING THINGS...'

SO THAT'S HOW IT IS, CHET? IT IS, SKILLION? SAY, SHE IS A GOOD-LOOKING...

THAT'S NOT HOW IT IS AT ALL, CHET! SHE LOOKS? PERIOD? CLARE AND I ARE GOING TO BE MARRIED...



'BUT MY NERVE MADE NO DIFFERENCE TO YOU... TO YOUR ATTITUDE. THE NEXT NIGHT, WHEN I GOT HOME FROM WORK, THERE WAS A HOW-TO-GET IN THE LIVING ROOM...'

CHIFFES, I'VE BEEN SAYING FOR CLARE AND ME TO GET MARRIED? THAT BE'LL COST ME MORE THAN I'VE GOT IN THE BANK...

I WAS JUST THINKING OF YOU, LEON. BUT IF THAT'S THE WAY YOU FEEL ABOUT IT, SEND IT BACK!





LEON'S VOICE FADES AND HE IS  
SILENT FOR A MOMENT. CHET WATCHES  
HIM FACE BACK AND FORTH.

LEON STOPS BEFORE HIM, AND CHET  
CAN SEE THE ANGER MOUNTING IN  
HIS FACE...

LEON TURNS AND LOOKS AGAIN AT  
THE BODY ON THE GOLD HARD TILE  
FLOOR OF THE BATHROOM...

THAT T.V. SET WENT  
BYN! YOU WHEN YOU  
WENT BACK TO COLLEGE  
AND BEFORE I EVEN  
FINISHED PAYING FOR  
IT, YOU'D SOLD IT?

I NEEDED  
MONEY,  
LEON. I  
NEEDED IT  
QUICK! I

FOR SOME CHEAP  
DAME UP THERE!  
BECAUSE OF SOME  
CHEAP DAME, CLARE,  
AND I HAD TO PUT  
OFF GETTING MARRIED.

I KNOW!  
YOU'VE GOT  
PLENTY TO  
BE MAD ABOUT,  
LEON.

YOU ALWAYS NEEDED SOMETHING!  
AND I NEVER REFUSED! CLARE  
AND I WERE CONSTANTLY PUTTING  
OFF OUR MARRIAGE, FOR THREE  
YEARS I KEPT HER WAITING BECAUSE  
OF YOU! FOR THREE YEARS! THEN  
YOU CAME HOME FROM COLLEGE!  
QUIT!

"YOU HAD PLANS. HIS PLANS. YOU STARTED TALKING  
FAST, BUT I WAS THROUGH..."

SO THIS OTHER GUY AND I...  
WE SAT DOWN AND FIGURED  
OUT HOW IN A YEAR WE  
COULD PAY OFF A SERVICE  
STATION AND EVENTUALLY  
RUN IT INTO A CHAIN...

FINE, CHET? IF THAT'S  
WHAT YOU WANT, GO TO  
IT! BUT DON'T EXPECT  
ANY MORE HELP FROM  
ME. I'M FORGOTTEN WHEN  
THAT COLLEGE MONEY  
IS REPAYED, CLARE  
AND I ARE GOING TO...

"I DIDN'T HAVE TO FINISH" I COULD SEE IT IN YOUR  
FACE...

THE COLLEGE MONEY,  
CHET? WHERE IS IT?  
HAND IT OVER!

LOOK, LEON! I GOT IT BACK  
FROM THE BARBER WHEN I  
HAD THIS CHANCE FOR A  
REAL BUY...

IT WAS OUT THERE, PARKED AT THE CURB, ONE OF  
THOSE FANCY FOREIGN SPORT CARS.

YOU KNOW WHAT THAT JOB COST ME?  
LEON! SEVEN THOUSAND DOLLARS!  
THREE YEARS AGO! I GOT IT FOR  
TWO! THE EIGHT HUNDRED I GOT  
BACK FROM COLLEGE AND THE TWO  
HUNDRED THEY ALLOWED ME FOR  
THE OLD BEAP...

YOU STILL  
OWE A  
THOUSAND  
DOLLARS  
ON IT...

"I TRIED TO SPEAK... TRIED TO GET MAD... BUT THE WORDS  
WOULDN'T COME OUT... AND THEN CLARE PUT HER HAND ON  
MY SHOULDER..."

IT'S ALL RIGHT, LEON!  
I'LL WAIT!

AND IF I LOAN MY OWN SERVICE  
STATION, LEON, REPAIRS AND  
GAS WON'T COST ME A CENT!  
RIGHT?



"SO CLAIRE AND I PUT OFF OUR WEDDING AGAIN, BUT IT WAS ALL JUST TALK. YOU NEVER DO ANYTHING ABOUT THAT SERVICE STATION, YOU WERE THE SAME OLD CHET, AND THAT EXPENSIVE CAR WAS EVERYTHING..."

"JUST THE DOWN PAYMENT FOR A RADIO, LEON. I'LL PAY OFF THE REST MYSELF WHEN I GET A JOB..."



"YOU NEVER LOOKED FOR A JOB..."

"MR. WILSON SAID I COULD BRING IT TO YOUR OFFICE TO SHOW YOU, LEON. IT'S ON SALE! TWELVE BUCKS! ISN'T IT THE SMALLEST WORM YOU EVER SAW? I'VE JUST GOT TO HAVE IT."



"AND I KEPT SHELLING OUT UNTIL CLAIRE PUT HER FOOT DOWN. THAT WAS LAST NIGHT WHEN YOU ASKED ME FOR ONE HUNDRED DOLLARS..."

"A STEPLING SILVER ROAD ORNAMENT FOR HIS CAR? NO, LEON! YOU GAVE HIM THE MONEY, AND I'M THROUGH WITH YOU!"

"THERE'S YOUR ANSWER, CHET!"



"YOU WERE STUNNED, WEREN'T YOU, CHET? IT WAS THE FIRST TIME I'D EVER REFUSED YOU ANYTHING! MAYBE THAT HAD SOMETHING TO DO WITH WHAT HAPPENED THIS AFTERNOON. MARKE IT WOULD HAVE HAPPENED ANYHOW. YOU CAME HOME AND FOUND CLAIRE HERE... ALONE. AND YOU WANTED HER TOO..."

"I DON'T DRINK, CHET. NOW, CHET! STOP IT! STOP!"

"IF YOU WON'T HAVE A DRINK WITH ME, HOW'S ABOUT A LITTLE KISS?"



"SO YOU TOOK HER..."

"YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL, CLAIRE!"

"DON'T CHET! PLEASE DON'T! SLEEP... OR, CHET! NO."



"LATER, WHEN YOU LOOKED FOR HER, YOU COULDN'T FIND HER..."

"CLAIRE? CLAIRE, WHERE ARE YOU?"

"UNTIL YOU CAME TO THE BATHROOM AND SAW HER LYING ON THE COLD WHITE TILE FLOOR WITH THE TOILET STAINS AROUND HER MOUTH AND THE MEDICINE CABINET OPEN AND THE EMPTY SODINE BOTTLE IN THE SINK. YOU SAW HER ADOPTED TWISTED FACE AND KNEW THAT SHE WAS DEAD."



LEON STANDS OVER HIS YOUNGER BROTHER, AND THERE IS A FLAMING RAGE BURNING IN HIS EYES...



I GAVE YOU EVERYTHING, CHET! WHAT I DIDN'T GIVE, YOU TOOK!

... A RAGE THAT SEEMS TO BLAZE BRIGHTER AND WILDER...



NOT I DIDN'T GIVE YOU EVERYTHING, DID I? YOU WANTED A HOOD ORNAMENT FOR YOUR CAR!

LEON! I...

... WILDER AND MADDER EACH MINUTE...



I NEVER COULD REFUSE YOU, CHET! YOU'LL HAVE THAT ORNAMENT FOR YOUR CAR!

BEFORE LONG, LEON DOYLE IS TEARING ALONG THE HIGHWAY FEELING THE WARMTH OF CHET'S BODY BESIDE HIM, AND LEON IS LAUGHING A MANICAL KIND OF LAUGH.



I GAVE YOU EVERYTHING YOU WANTED, CHET! I EVEN GAVE YOU CLAIRES! AND NOW... EH... EH... YOU'VE GOT YOUR ORNAMENT! EH... EH! LIKE IT, CHET? LIKE IT?

BUT CHET'S BODY IS SILENT! HE DOESN'T ANSWER LEON'S QUESTION! HOW CAN HE...?



LIKE THE HOOD ORNAMENT, CHET? EH... EH... EH... EH...

FOR CHET'S EYES ARE CLOSED TO THE SIGHT OF THE ROAD FLYING AT HIM. HIS EARS ARE DEAF TO THE ROAR OF THE ENGINE. HE DOES NOT FEEL THE WIND RUSHING BY HIS HEAD WHERE LEON HAS FASTENED IT SECURELY TO THE HOOD...



EH... EH... EH... EH...

HEE...HEE! WELL, GEEZE! THAT'S THE YARN! DOESN'T THAT TOP 'EM ALL? ANYWAY, IT PUTS THE LAD ON C.K.'S PERVERTED PERIODICAL FOR THIS ISSUE! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE RASHT OF HORROR, BY THE WAY! DID YOU HEAR DE ONE ABOUT DE HEADLESS BODY THAT GOT SQUO'D IN A BOTTLE OF POP BECAUSE... SET... DE CAR IT ARE! HEE...HEE! AND POP'LL EAT UP ALL THE CAR YOU GET FROM THE E.C. PAN-ADVENT CLUB.



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**NO. 43**  
**SEPTEMBER**



**10¢**

# **TALES** **FROM THE** **CRYPT**

**FEATURING...**



**THE CRYPT-KEEPER**



**THE OLD WITCH**



**THE VAULT-KEEPER**



# ARE YOU A RED DUPE?

IN THE TOWN OF GAZDOSKY IN THE HEART OF SOVIET RUSSIA, YOUNG MELVIN BLUZUNKEN - SKOVITCHSKY PUBLISHED A COMIC MAGAZINE...



...SO THEY CAME AND SMASHED HIS FOUR-COLOR PRESS...



...AND HUNG POOR, MELVIN THE NEXT MORNING!



- HERE IN AMERICA, WE CAN STILL PUBLISH COMIC MAGAZINES, NEWSPAPERS, SLICKS, BOOKS AND THE BIBLE. WE DON'T HAVE TO SEND THEM TO A CENSOR FIRST. NOT YET...
- FOR THERE ARE SOME PEOPLE IN AMERICA WHO WOULD LIKE TO CENSOR... WHO WOULD LIKE TO SUPPRESS COMICS. IT ISN'T THAT THEY DON'T LIKE COMICS FOR THEM! THEY DON'T LIKE THEM FOR YOU!
- THESE PEOPLE SAY THAT COMIC BOOKS AREN'T AS GOOD FOR CHILDREN AS NO COMIC BOOKS, OR SOMETHING LIKE THAT. SOME OF THESE PEOPLE ARE NO-GOODS. SOME ARE DO-GOODERS. SOME ARE WELL-MEANING. AND SOME ARE JUST PLAIN MEAN.
- BUT WE ARE CONCERNED WITH AN AMAZING REVELATION. AFTER MUCH SEARCHING OF NEWSPAPER FILES, WE'VE MADE AN ASTOUNDING DISCOVERY:

## THE GROUP MOST ANXIOUS TO DESTROY COMICS ARE THE COMMUNISTS!

- WE'RE SERIOUS! NO KIDDIN'! HERE! READ THIS:

THE COMMUNIST "DAILY WORKER" OF JULY 15, 1953 SAID THAT COMICS PLAY THE CONSCIOUS ROLE OF:

\*...BRUTALIZING AMERICAN YOUTH, THE BETTER TO PREPARE THEM FOR MILITARY SERVICE IN IMPLEMENTING OUR GOVERNMENT'S AIMS OF WORLD DOMINATION, AND TO ACCEPT THE ATROCITIES NOW BEING PERPETRATED BY AMERICAN SOLDIERS AND AIRMEN IN KOREA UNDER THE FLAG OF THE UNITED NATIONS.\*

THIS ARTICLE ALSO QUOTES GERSHON LEGMAN (WHO CLAIMS TO BE A GHOST WRITER FOR DR. FREDERICK WERTHAM, THE AUTHOR OF A RECENT BLAST AGAINST COMICS PUBLISHED IN "THE LADIES HOME JOURNAL"). THIS SAME G. LEGMAN, IN ISSUE #3 OF "NEUROLOGIA," PUBLISHED IN AUTUMN 1949, SAID:

\*THE CHILD'S NATURAL CHARACTER...MUST BE DISTORTED TO FIT CIVILIZATION...FANTASY VIOLENCE WILL PARALYZE HIS RESISTANCE, DIVERT HIS AGGRESSION TO UNREAL ENEMIES AND FRUSTRATIONS, AND IN THIS WAY PREVENT HIM FROM REBELLING AGAINST PARENTS AND TEACHERS. THIS WILL SIPHON OFF HIS RESISTANCE AGAINST SOCIETY, AND PREVENT REVOLUTION.\*

- SO THE NEXT TIME SOME JOKER GETS UP AT A P.T.A. MEETING, OR STARTS JABBERING ABOUT THE "NAUGHTY COMIC BOOKS" AT YOUR LOCAL CANDY STORE, GIVE HIM THE ONCE-OVER. WE'RE NOT SAYING HE IS A COMMUNIST! HE MAY BE INNOCENT OF THE WHOLE THING! HE MAY BE A DUPE! HE MAY NOT EVEN READ THE "DAILY WORKER"! IT'S JUST THAT HE'S SWALLOWED THE RED BAIT... HOOK, LINE, AND SINKER!

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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HELLO! HI, LOW-LIFERS! YEP, IT'S YOUR LURID LIBRARIAN, THE CRYPT-KEEPER, READY TO OPEN ANOTHER SQUEAL-SESSION HERE IN THE CRYPT WITH ANOTHER OF MY FAVORITE TWISTED-TALES OF TORMENT AND TORTURE. SO, COME ON IN AND SIT DOWN ON THAT BLOOD-STAINED STONE MARKER THERE AND I'LL BEGIN THE YELP-YARN I CALL...

## FOUR-WAY SPLIT



ROY DIXON AWOKE WITH A START, KNOWING SOMETHING WAS WRONG. HE OPENED HIS PUZZLED EYES, LOOKED AROUND BLANKLY, . . . AND SCREAMED. WHERE WAS HE? WHAT WAS THIS COLD GREY STONE ROOM THAT BOXED HIM IN LIKE A TRAPPED ANIMAL? WHAT WAS THAT STEADY HISS, LIKE A THOUSAND VENOMOUS REPTILES? WHY WAS HE BOUND HELPLESSLY TO THIS IRON CHAIR? HE STRUGGLED FURIOUSLY, BUT THE ROPES ONLY BRUISED HIS FLESH. HIS THROAT WAS TORN RAW BY HIS WILD PLEADING SCREAMS THAT ONLY DEAFENED HIS OWN EARS. . .

PLEASE! HELP ME, SOMEBODY! LET ME OUT OF HERE! YA AAAAAHHHHH...



Jack Davis

BUT NOBODY CAME TO RELEASE ROY FROM HIS NIGHT-MARISH TRAP. AND HE SEEMED TO HEAR A GHOSTLY, HOLLOW-TONED VOICE ECHOING AND REVERBERATE THROUGH THE CHIN ROOM...

I SENTENCE YOU, ROY DICKSON, TO EXECUTION IN THE GAS CHAMBER FOR FIRST DEGREE MURDER...

8-GAS CHAMBER? NO! NO! LET ME OUT! THIS IS WRONG!



NOW THE WILDLY SCREAMING PRISONER COULD SEE... DIMLY... THE HOODED FIGURE PEERING IN AT HIM IMMEDIATELY THROUGH THE OBSERVATION WINDOW, REGULATING THE FLOW OF LETHAL CANCER GAS THAT ISSUED FROM THE GASED VENT IN THE FLOOR... HIS EXECUTIONER!

NO! IT CAN'T BE! THIS IS WRONG! NOT THE WAY I PLANNED IT AT ALL! YOU CAN'T DO THIS! IT'S A MISTAKE! PLEASE! OH, LORD... STOP HIM!



BUT THERE WAS NO ANSWER FROM THE HOODED WATCHER. ROY DICKSON'S BRAIN CLOUTERED NOW. HIS SENSES REELED CRAZILY AS THE DEADLY VAPORS WERE ABSORBED FROM HIS HEAVING LUNGS INTO HIS RACING BLOODSTREAM... HIS CHIN SAGGED... HIS HEAD LOOLED. HE WAS DYING...

THIS... IS ALL WRONG! IT... CAN'T BE... TRUE!



WAS IT A DREAM? A HOODED ANGELOMARE? IT MUST BE THAT! ROY CLUNG TO THAT REASSURING THOUGHT AS THE STONE ROOM SPUN AND PAGED BEFORE HIS BLINDING EYES. DREAMILY, HIS MEMORY REACHED BACK, BACK TO THE WAR, RED DAYS OF WORLD WAR II WHEN HE AND BUCK BOURMAN HAD BEEN IN FINE FURRY...

BOMBARDIER TO PILOT! TARGET'S DEAD AHEAD!

PILOT! PILOT! ROY REMEMBERS TO GET 'EM!



OF COURSE, THAT SORT OF THING HAD BEEN DURING OFF-DUTY HOURS. ON DUTY, IT WAS CAPTAIN BUCK BOURMAN, PILOT, AND SECOND LIEUTENANT ROY DICKSON, BOMBARDIER... AND NO MORE...

SHARE THE LEAD, OUT LIEUTENANT! THERE'S A WAR ON! REMEMBER?

BUCK! I... YES, SIR!



ONCE IN THE AIR, SLIDING HIS ROARING METAL MONSTER, PRESIDENT WITH COMEL, BUCK HAD ALWAYS BEEN ALL AHEAD RIGHT THROUGH TO HIS STEEL-SPRING BONE.

PILOT TO BOMBARDIER? THIS IS A PRIME TARGET TONIGHT! UNDERSTAND? DON'T MISS... OR YOU'LL NEVER SEE MY SHIP AGAIN.

Y-YES, SIR?



YET, THAT'D BEEN BUCK... PULLING PANTS, SHOWBOATING THE CREW, SLIDING IN HIS SILVER BARRED AUTHORITY. BUT NOW'S BUCKED IT IN 8000, MAKING BUCK BOURMAN AND FINE HELPLESSLY WHEN HIS CHANCE CAME... ON THE BOMBING RUN... WHEN HE WAS IN COMMAND.

TARGET SIGHTED? TAKING OVER, CAPTAIN! STEADY, NOW STEADY... OUT THAT SIDE-SLIP, HEAR ME? THAT'S AN ORDER, CAPTAIN!

Y-YES, LIEUTENANT!



BUT THEN, BETWEEN MISHONS, THEY'D BEEN THROB AS THIEVES AGAIN... BUYING EACH OTHER DRINKS AND PLANNING THEIR FUTURE... AFTER THE WAR...

THINK OF IT, BOY... DUMP OWN AIRLINE, HAULING AIR FREIGHT... YOU AND ME... PARTNERS! ALL WE'D NEED IS ONE SURPLUS FOUR ENGINE JOB TO GET STARTED!

SOUNDS GREAT, BUDD! COUNT ME IN MY SHARE.



AND SO, ONE GLORIOUS POST-WAR MORNING, THEY'D STOOD PROUDLY BEFORE THEIR QUICKEST HANGAR... BUSINESS PARTNERS...

THE BUCKEROY AIRLINES UNFOLDS ITS SILVER WINGS TA-TA-TA-TA!



CAN THE GLOWING, BOY? WE'VE GOT A MORTGAGE TO PAY OFF ON THAT OLD RECONSTITUTIONED B-BB? LET'S GET TO WORK...



FINALLY, AFTER WEEKS OF LEG-WORK, THEY'D LANDED THEIR FIRST CONTRACT... AND FLYING THEIR FIRST LOAD HAD BEEN JUST LIKE OLD TIMES... TOO MUCH LIKE OLD TIMES...

NO LOAFING, BOY! GET BACK AND CHECK THE GARGO!

STILL PULLIN' HANK, BUDD? THE WAR'S OVER, GUY! REMEMBER THAT! WITH PARTNERS!



ROY LIFTED HIS HEAD BROODER, THE PAIN FACED THE HIDING OF THE LETHAL GAS WAS GONE...

I'M ALIVE! THE GAS CHAMBER HAS VANISHED! IT WAS A DREAM! IT'S DARK NOW! I'M AWAKE! I KNOW THEY NEVER BROUGHT ME TO TRIAL... NEVER SENTENCED ME TO THE GAS CHAMBER, I KNOW! IT WAS ALL... A DREAM.



BUT WHAT WAS THIS? WHAT WAS THIS NEW TORTURE BOY WAS SUDDENLY AWARE OF? WHY WAS IT SO HARD TO BREATHE? WHAT WAS AROUND BOY'S NECK... SQUEEZING... SQUEEZING...

OH, LORD! I'M ON A SCAFFOLD! THIS IS A CHORE... HOOBBE AROUND MY NECK? I'M BEING KILLED!

I SENTENCE YOU, BOY BUCK, TO BE HANGED BY THE NECK UNTIL DEAD!



THE NOOSE STEADILY TIGHTENED, CLAMPING HIS WINDPIPE SHUT FROM THE WRIGHT OF HIS BODY. SOMETIMES THE SHARTEST THING HAPPENED... THE VICTIM'S NECK SQUEEZED BY THE DROPPING TRAP... LETTING HIM DIE A SLOW HORRIFYING DEATH BY STRANGULATION... DRAGGING HIM INTO A SUFFOCATING ETERNITY...



NO! NO! YOU CAN'T HANG ME! I ESCAPED THE LAW! THIS IS A DREAM, I'M SURE! ANOTHER HORRIBLE DREAM...

ROY'S MIND SANK INTO A DEEP DARK POOL AGAIN OUT OF WHICH PUFFED VISIONS OF THE PAST CAME ONCE MORE... REVIEWING HIS ASSOCIATION WITH BUCK BORDON... EVEN THOUGH THEIR AIRLINE'S EXPANDED THROUGH THE YEARS, UP INTO GOLDEN BRACKETS, BUCK'D KEPT IT UP, HATEFULLY, PULLING HANK...

CANCEL THIS PETERSON CONTRACT, BOY! IT'S NO GOOD! IT WON'T PAY!

IT IS GOOD! IT WILL PAY! NOW LISTEN, BUCK! ONCE AND FOR ALL, I'M NOT A Hired HAND ON THE PAYROLL! I'M AN EQUAL PARTNER! UNDERSTAND?



ROY REMEMBERED HOW HE'D WARNED HIS BUSINESS ASSOCIATE...

I NEGOTIATED THAT CONTRACT MYSELF, BUCK, AND I'M BACK AND I'M Tired OF YOUR BOLLERING ME. TRY IT ONCE MORE AND SO HELP ME, I'LL PULL OUT OF THIS PARTNERSHIP!

GO AHEAD, ROY! ANYTIME YOU WANT TO CALL IT QUITS IS GREAT WITH ME! IF YOU CAN'T PLAY IT MY WAY, JUST SAY THE WORD! SOMEBODY'S GOT TO BE BOSS HERE AND RUN THINGS RIGHT!

AND ROY REMEMBERED HOW HE'D FUNDED AND GAMBLER INWARDLY, FINALLY COMING TO THE STARK REALIZATION...

SO THAT'S HIS GAME! HE'S TRYING TO MAKE IT SO MISERABLE FOR ME, I'LL PULL OUT AND LEAVE HIM TO RUN THE WHOLE ROMANIA!

WELL... THIS GAME CAN BE PLAYED BOTH WAYS! OF COURSE! WHY NOT? WHY NOT HIM? IF I CAN GET HIM TO PULL OUT... TURN THE TABLES... THE WHOLE DEAL WOULD BE MINE! BUT HOW? HOW COULD I GET RID OF HIM? I'VE GOT TO THINK OF A WAY...



AND SO, HIS ULTIMATE HATRED FOR HIS PARTNER HAD RAZED LIKE CAUSTIC INTO ROY'S SOUL AND HE'D ELIMINATED ALL WAYS TO HIS SUCCESSFUL AIRLINES OF BUCK HORDON. ALL WAYS, THAT IS, EXCEPT ONE...

MURDER! I'VE GOT TO KILL HIM! IT'S THE ONLY WAY!



ROY REMEMBERED HOW HE'D STUDIED THE WALL MAP AND DECIDED...

THEY SAY THAT "MURDER WILL OUT"! A MURDER CAN NEVER STAY CONCEALED! SO... I WON'T CONCEAL IT! I'LL PLANT IT STRAIGHT OUT IN THE OPEN! AND HERE'S WHERE THE LAW WOULD SEND FOR THE FIRM PLUS MY WARTIME TRAINING PAYS OFF!



ROY'D ALWAYS HANDED THE "DIRTY WORK" FOR THE AIRLINE... THE LAW CASES THAT HAD COME UP FROM TIME TO TIME. HE'D EVEN TAKEN LAW COURSES AT NIGHT TO HELP. NOW, HIS LAW WORK WOULD HELP HIM TO COMMIT MURDER, AND GET AWAY WITH IT!

THESE FOUR STATES, UTAH, ARIZONA, NEW MEXICO, AND COLORADO, ALL COME TOGETHER... HERE, AT ONE COMMON POINT AND THAT'S IT! A FOUR STATE WHORL! OVER ONE CERTAIN MURDER!



AND SO ROY'D PREPARED AND WAITED... AND HIS OPPORTUNITY'S COME ONE NIGHT, WHEN THE OFFICE HELP HAD COME HOME AND BUCK WAS WORKING LATE, SETTING A NIGHT AIR FREIGHT SHIPMENT CHECKED OUT...

WHY'S THERE? OH, IT'S YOU, ROY? I THOUGHT YOU WENT HOME WITH THE OTHERS. WELL, SCRAM... I'M BUSY!

STILL, THE BOSS, EH, BUCK? STILL THE CAPTAIN ORDERING AROUND HIS CREW? WELL, MY DEAR BOSS CAPTAIN...



ROY REMEMBERED HOW HE'D RAISED THE MONEY WRENCH...BRINGING IT DOWN ACROSS BUCK'S HEAD CAREFULLY...EASY...NOT TOO HARD...NOT HARD ENOUGH TO KILL HIM...NOT YET.



...THAT WAS YOUR LAST ORDER! YOU'RE GOING TO TAKE A LITTLE TRIP...

UNNNNNN

OUT INTO THE DARKNESS, ROY'D CARRIED BUCK'S UNCONSCIOUS FORM...INTO THE REAR DOOR OF THE HANGAR...TO THE SURPLUS B-29 THEY STILL USED FOR SHORT FREIGHT HAULS...SHORT NIGHT HAULS...LIKE THE ONE TONNAGE.



ALL LOADED UP...READY TO GO NOW! I'LL CHECK THE CARGO HOLD NOW! ALL I HAVE TO DO IS SHIFT A FEW CRATES...AND I'M SET...

IT'D BEEN SO EASY...TYPING BUCK UP, SAGGING HIM IN CASE HE'D COME TO, AND ST RINGING HIM UP ONTO THE OLD BOMB RACKS...



...THEN STOWING THE OTHER ITEM, THE ITEM ROY'D BOUGHT AND RECONDITIONED PAINFULLY...THE JUMP-PLUS BOMBING...INTO THE CLUTTERED NOSE OF THE OLD SUPERFORT...



AND WAITING AROUND TILL THE GROUND CREW'S TRUNDLED THE OLD LADY OUT ONTO THE FIELD AND NAMED UP HER ENGINES, IT'D BEEN SO EASY TO BUMP INTO BATSON, THE PILOT.



SORTA BRINGS BACK OLD MEMORIES, THAT BARY! YOU KNOW, BATSON! I'D LIKE TO COME ALONG FOR A RIDE TONIGHT! DEAL WITH ROY?

WHY, UH... SURE, FINE, MR. DECK! YOU'RE THE BOSS!

AND AS THEY SCARED WEST, IT'D BEEN SO EASY FOR ROY TO PRETEND A WAR HERO'S NOSTALGIA...



YOU KNOW, BATSON! IT'S JUST COME OVER ME! I'D LIKE TO MAKE LIKE A BOMBARDIER AGAIN...FOR OLD TIME'S SAKE. I'M GOING FORWARD INTO THE NOSE...FOLLOW MY ORDERS ON THE INTERCOM...JUST LIKE YOU'RE MY PILOT AND WE'RE HEADED OVER BERLIN! AND STOP GRINNING!

I'M... I'M NOT GRINNING! MR. DECK! I UNDERSTAND!

IT'D BEEN SO EASY TO UNCOVER THE BOMB-SIGHT AND PLUG IN THE LEADS HE'D WORKED ON FOR WEEKS...THE LEADS THAT CONTROLLED THE ALERONS...THE ELEVATORS...THE RUDDER...THE BOMB-DAYS...AND THE BOMB-RACKS...THE BOMB RUN!



ALL RIGHT, BATSON! LET'S HEAD HER AROUND TO A BEADING OF THREE DEGREES SOUTH BY WEST...

BUT THAT'S OFF OUR COURSE, MR. DECK!

NOT HER! MOODY OFF, BATSON. JUST PLAY ALONG AND REMOON YOUR BOSS, HUNT!

OKAY, MR. BATSON! IT'S FOUR SAS!

THE PROUD OLD GAI HAD TURNED SOUTHWEST AND ROY'D LET GRIM AND THUNT-LIPPED... MORE TENSE THAN HE'D EVER BEEN ON ANY MISSION OVER GERMANY. AND HE'D PLAYED IT LIKE A GAME...

BOMBARDIER TO PILOT! TAKE HER DOWN TO 1000 FEET. HEADING 2 DEGREES, SOUTH BY SOUTHWEST.

YES, SIR?

BUT IT'D BEEN NO IDLE GAME FOR ROY. IT'D BEEN A GAME OF DEATH AND THE STAKES WERE HIGH. THIS HAD TO BE "ON TARGET," "DIRECT HIT"... ON THE MOON? BUT HE'D TIMED IT PERFECTLY! THE MOON HAD ILLUMINATED EVERYTHING BELOW.

TARGET SIGHTED! I'LL PUT, TAKE OVER, BATSON. BATSON. LET GO OF THE CONTROLS!

THE BOMB BAY'S HAD OPENED. SUCK'D LOCKED DOWN AND TRIED TO SCREAM BUT THE GAS HAD HELD. FINE CROSS Hairs HAD MOVED SLOWLY TOGETHER, AND THEN...

BOMB AWAY!

DOWN AND DOWN, THE HUMAN BOMB HAD HURLED.

AND THE MEMORY FAGED AS THE CONSTRUCTION AROUND ROY'S THROAT EASED AND AIR RUSHED INTO HIS LUNGS IN GREAT SCORING GULPS...

I... I'M ALIVE AGAIN! I'M NOT HANGING ANYMORE! THE MOON IS GONE! I... I WAS DREAMING AGAIN.

SUDDENLY, THERE WAS DARKNESS AGAIN FOR ROY.

NOW, WHAT'S HAPPENING? WHAT'S THIS MOODY-DROPPING OVER MY HEAD? WHY AM I BEING PUSHED DOWN INTO THIS CHAIR? WHY ARE THEY STRAPPING ME IN IT? WHAT... WHAT... OH, LORD!

AND ONCE AGAIN HE HEARD THE SAME HOODED EXECUTIONER'S VOICE... AS THE SWITCH WAS THROWN...

I SENTENCE YOU, ROY BIXON, TO DEATH BY ELECTROCUTION!

NO! OH, GOD! NO! IT'S THE ELECTRIC CHAIR!

THE FIRST JOLT RIPPED INTO ROY ORION LIKE A MILLION WHITE-HOT NEEDLES... BOILING HIS BLOOD. HE COULD SMELL HIS OWN FLESH FIRING. THE SECOND JOLT SPIRALED HIM INTO A BLUE-WHITE FLASHING MYST THAT CHANGED INTO A PICTURE OF THE PAST... OF BUCK JORDON'S BODY CRASHING TO EARTH DIRECTLY UPON A LARGE FLAT STONE MARKER...

RIGHT ON TARGET...

YES, IT *HAD* BEEN 'RIGHT ON TARGET'. ROY'S PIN-POINT BOMBING HAD DROPPED BUCK JORDON ON THE STONE MARKER THAT DELINEATES THE COMMON CORNERS OF UTAH, COLORADO, ARIZONA, AND NEW MEXICO... STAINING IT RED WITH BLOOD AND RUPTURED FLESH...



IT HAD ALL BOWE ACCORDING TO PLAN. ROY'D OPENLY AND BOLDLY PLEADED GUILTY TO THE GRAND JURY'S INDICTMENT. BUT THEN THE FUN HAD STARTED AS THE REPRESENTATIVES OF THE COURTS OF FOUR STATES WRANGLED LIKE ALLEY-CATS OVER ONE MOUSE...

UTAH CLAIMS JURISDICTION IN THIS MURDER CASE

ARIZONA CLAIMS THE RIGHT TO TRY THE PRISONER

NEW MEXICO

COLORADO!

A LEGAL BRAWL HAD DEVELOPED. BUCK JORDON HAD MET HIS DEATH AT THE FOUR MUTUAL CORNERS OF THESE STATES. EACH ONE DEMANDED ITS RIGHT TO PROSECUTE, CLAIMING SOLE JURISDICTION. ROY'D BEEN ABLE TO HAVE HIMSELF RELEASED ON \$50,000 BAIL, VIA A WRIT OF HABEAS CORPUS...

THEY'LL DRAG THROUGH COURT AFTER COURT. AT ANY DECISION TO TRY ME... I'LL APPEAL! THIS WILL GO ON FOR YEARS! I CAN APPEAL RIGHT UP TO THE SUPREME COURT!



AND ROY'D BEEN *RIGHT*? HIS PLAN HAD WORKED EXACTLY AS HE'D *PREDICTED* IT WOULD... RED TAPE HAD *PILED UP*... TANGLING INTO A THICKER AND MORE COMPLICATED KNOT!

FOUR STATES... BICKERING... EACH STUBBORN... JEALOUS... PRONTO! THEY'LL NEVER BRING ME TO TRIAL... AT LEAST NOT IN MY LIFETIME!



THE MEMORY FADDES, THE PAINFUL JOLTS OF ELECTRICITY WERE GONE. ROY LOOKED AROUND. IT WAS DAWN NOW... DAWN OVER A DESERT WASTELAND...

I... I'M *AWAKE* AGAIN? I *HASN'T* ELECTROCUTED! OH, GOD! WHAT'S HAPPENING TO ME? WHY AM I BEING TORTURED LIKE THIS... LIKE... *ME?* WHAT AM I DOING HERE?



ROY LOOKED DOWN. HE WAS STANDING ON A FLAT ROCK. A WALKER. A FAMILIAR WALKER.

THIS IS WHERE BUCK'S BOOF LANDED! I MUST BE DREAMING AGAIN!

NO, ROY DIDN'T THIS IS NO DREAM!



THE HOODED FIGURE STOOD BESIDE THE MARKER.

YOU AGAIN! THE EXECUTIONER! BUT THEN I MUST BE DREAMING! I'M A FREE MAN! THE COURTS DIDN'T CHOOSE ANYTHING! THEY WON'T FOR YEARS SO YOU CAN'T BE MY OFFICIAL EXECUTIONER!

THEN LET US SAY I AM YOUR UNOFFICIAL EXECUTIONER!



THE HOODED FIGURE POINTED TO THE GREY WALLED STRUCTURE WITH THE LITTLE OBSERVATION WINDOW.

YOU ESCAPED LEGAL EXECUTION BY YOUR DUNNING PLAN, ROY! YOU ESCAPED THE GAS CHAMBER OF THAT STATE. SO I LET YOU DIE A LITTLE IN IT...



THE HOODED FIGURE SWEEP HIS ARM. YOU ESCAPED THE SCOFFOLD OF THAT STATE... SO I LET YOU TRY THAT ONE TOO...



...IN A CIRCLE...POINTING...

YOU ESCAPED THE ELECTRIC CHAIR OF THAT STATE... AND SO YOU'VE FELT WHAT IT IS TO BE THAT WAY!



...POINTING TO THE LONG SHADOWS ON THE SAUNY DESERT SAND...

AND NOW FOR THE LAST AND FINAL EXECUTION. THIS IS THE ONE I WILL NOT BE ABLE TO GIVE YOU JUST A TASTE OF THE FIRING SQUAD READY. AIM.

NO! NO! THIS IS ALL SOME NIGHT-MARISH DREAM!



BUT THE EXECUTIONER REMOVED HIS HOOD...AND ROY SAW THAT THIS WAS NO DREAM...



...FIRE!

BUCK! BUCK! BUCK! BUCK! BUCK!

THE END

HEH, HEH! SO POOR OLD ROY GOT IT FROM BUCK... FOUR DAYS! WELL, YOU'VE GOT IT FROM E.C. FOUR DAYS WHEN YOU READ ONE OF YOUR GHOUL-LUNATIC'S MASS: FOUR CHILLING SCREAM-STORIES. NEXT COMES E.C. WITH HIS... THEN I'LL BE BACK TO RE-REVEL YOU AND E.C. WILL COMPLETE THE CREEPY QUARTET. SO READ ON AND RETEN, DEAN FIEND. I'LL DO YOU LATER! OH, BY THE WAY HAVE YOU HEARD ABOUT THE E.C. FAN-ABOCT CLOST? YOU HAVE? OH! THEN YOU KNOW! 'BYE!





# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HELLO! HERE'S A HORRIBLE 'HY' TO ALL YOU HORROR-HAPPY HYDISTS! WELCOME NOW TO THE VAULT OF HORROR. THIS IS YOUR NARRATOR OF NAUSEATING NOVELTIES, THE VAULT-KEEPER, READY TO READ ANOTHER REVOLTING RECREATION FROM MY LIBRARY OF LECHEMIOUS LITERATURE. THIS TERROR-TONE, THIS CHANCE CHUMP OF CHILLING CHARNEL CHAPTER IS APTLY ENTITLED...

## COLD WAR

THERE WAS A BITING FROST IN THE LATE NOVEMBER NIGHT AIR WHICH MOVERED ABOUT THE LAST REMAINING FALL FLOWERS, BISTONING IDY KISSES OF DEATH UPON THEIR SHIVERING PETALS. THE LEAVES HAD LONG SINCE LEFT THE TREES, AND IN THEIR UNRAILED TRUNKS TO THE COMING WINTER WINDS, UNCOVERING BRANCHES THAT REACHED SKYWARD LIKE TWISTED AND WITHERED SOUT-WRACKED FINGERS. THERE, IN THAT GARDEN OF GLOOM, SAT THE WIFE AND THE LOVER, AND ON THE GREY COLD FLAGSTONE TERRACE STOOD THE HUSBAND, WATCHING... AND WAITING.



YOUR ARMS ARE LIKE ICE, MARIA. LET ME SET YOU YOUR WARM, MY DARLING...

PLEASE, NORMAN. DO THAT! I AM... IT COOLD!



THE MOMENT NORMAN KING HAD MET MARIA HOLT AT THE PARTY GOING ON WITHIN THE HOUSE BEYOND, HE'D FALLEN IN LOVE WITH HER. HE'D WAITED TILL SHE WAS ALONE... THEN COAXED HER INTO THE GARDEN, BRAZENLY PLAUNTING HIS ATTENTIONS UPON HER IN FRONT OF HER STONE-FACED HUSBAND. NOW, AS NORMAN PASSED PAUL HOLT, HE NOTICED HIS CYNICAL SMILE...

YOU'RE WASTING YOUR TIME, MY FRIEND. MARIA WILL AMUSE HERSELF WITH YOU... AND SAVE HER LOVE FOR ME!

YOU'RE PRETTY SOME OF YOURSELF, HOLT! WELL, WE'LL SEE!



NORMAN HAD NOTICED THE COLO AND IMPASSIVE IMPOS-  
 SENCE THAT HAD SEEMED TO BLANKET MARIA AND PAUL  
 AND HE'D ASSUMED THAT THE PASSION-FIRES HAD  
 COOLED FOR THEM. SO HE'S SET HIS SIGHTS UPON THE  
 POOR UNHAPPY WIFE, DETERMINED TO STIR UP THE FLAMES  
 WITHIN HER ONCE AGAIN... FOR HIM, HE GOT MORE  
 THAN MARIA'S WRAP FROM THE CLOAKROOM...



HE FINISHED THE DRUG-NOMED BLUE-BLACK 38 AUTO-  
 MATIC HE'D TAKEN FROM HIS OVERCOAT, AND IT GAVE HIM  
 CONFIDENCE...



WHEN NORMAN RETURNED TO THE GARDEN, PAUL WAS  
 GONE...

NOW'S OUR CHANCE, MARIA.  
 LET'S GO SOMEPLACE...  
 ANYPLACE... JUST SO LONG  
 AS IT'S AWAY FROM HERE!  
 I WANT TO BE ALONE WITH  
 YOU.

OH... I COULDN'T,  
 NORMAN. PAUL WOULD  
 WORRY! BESIDES,  
 WE ARE ALONE  
 OUT HERE, AREN'T  
 WE?



NORMAN TOOK MARIA IN HIS ARMS... TRIED TO KISS HER...

DON'T TALK ME, MARIA. YOU  
 KNOW WHAT I MEAN. I'M  
 MADLY, HELPLESSLY IN LOVE  
 WITH YOU!

PLEASE NORMAN  
 DON'T! PLEASE...  
 YOU KNOW I'M  
 MARRIED...



I HAVE EYES, MARIA! I  
 CAN SEE YOUR HUSBAND  
 AND YOU ARE LIKE TWO  
 STONES! THE LOVE  
 THAT WAS ONCE BETWEEN  
 YOU IS DEAD! WHAT IF YOU  
 WEREN'T MARRIED?...  
 IF YOU HAD NO HUS-  
 BAND? COULDN'T YOU  
 CARE FOR ME?

WHAT'S  
 THE USE  
 IN SUP-  
 POSING,  
 NORMAN?  
 YOU SAY I  
 DO  
 HAVE A  
 HUSBAND.



SUDDENLY MARIA TURNED AND RAN  
 TOWARDS THE HOUSE...

... AND THERE'S  
 NOTHING WE  
 CAN DO ABOUT IT!

MARIA!  
 COME  
 BACK!



MARIA DISAPPEARED THROUGH THE  
 FRENCH DOORS AS PAUL HOLT'S  
 JEERING LAUGHTER RANG OUT FROM  
 THE FAR END OF THE GARDEN...

FEE, MR. KING!  
 THERE'S NOTHING  
 YOU CAN DO ABOUT  
 IT...

WHY YOU DIRT,  
 SNEAKING... YOU  
 WERE ALONE  
 THERE IN THE  
 SHADOWS ALL  
 THIS TIME...  
 LISTENING!



NORMAN'S HAND WENT TO THE LOADED AUTOMATIC IN HIS POCKET AS THE SNEERING HUSBAND APPROACHED, AND HIS FACE FLUSHED RED WITH HATE AND ANGER AT THE AMUSED TWINKLE IN PAUL'S EYES...

DO YOU COULDN'T CARRY HER ARM, KING? WHAT A PITY!

SHE SAID THERE WAS NO USE SUPPOSING, HOLT! SHE SAID THERE WAS NOTHING I COULD DO ABOUT YOU! WELL, THERE IS!



NORMAN WHIPPED OUT THE GUN, PRESSING THE COLD BLACK SNOW-NOSED MUZZLE AGAINST PAUL HOLT'S CHEST. THE SNEERING SMILE VANISHED FROM PAUL'S FACE...

THERE'S THIS I CAN DO! I CAN KILL YOU!

DON'T BE A FOOL, KING! BEFORE YOU PULL THAT TRIGGER, LET ME TELL YOU WHY IT WON'T DO YOU ANY GOOD!



YOU'RE TRYING TO KILL ME! TELL SOMEONE SEES US, HOLT, WELL, IT WON'T WORK!

NOBODY WILL COME OUT IN THIS COLD, KING! I MERELY WANT TO TELL YOU ABOUT MARIA, AND ME... AND OUR ROMANCE. NOW IT BEGAN... EVERYTHING! BUT...



PAUL HOLT'S EYES NARROWED...

BUT, IF YOU'RE DETERMINED TO SHOOT, SO AHEAD!

ALL RIGHT! START TALKING, HOLT! BUT MAKE IT QUICK!



CURIOSITY HAD GOTTEN THE BETTER OF NORMAN. HE RELAXED A BIT AS PAUL BEGAN HIS STORY, BUT HE KEPT THE GUN MUZZLE LEVELLED AGAINST PAUL'S CHEST...

IT'S A STRANGE AND FRIGHTENING STORY, NORMAN! IT BEGAN WHEN I FIRST SAW MARIA. IT WAS A LITTLE MORE THAN A YEAR AGO. SHE WAS SURROUNDED BY SKELETONS AND VAMPIRES AND WEREWOLVES.

SKELETONS? VAMPIRES? WHAT IN BLAZES ARE YOU TALKING ABOUT?



"YOU SEE, I'D GONE TO VISIT SOME RICH FRIENDS IN PORT-AU-PRINCE, HAITI. THEY'D TAKEN ME TO A HALLOWE'EN MASQUERADE PARTY. MARIA WAS MADE UP AS A LITTLE SERPENTINE RED DEVIL. I CAME AS A SCARCEON. I WAS ATTRACTED TO HER THE MINUTE I SAW HER..."

NO PAIR LIFTING MY MASK TILL AFTER MIDNIGHT!

BUT I'VE GOT TO SEE IF THE FACE MATCHES THE FIGURE...



"AT MIDNIGHT, MARIA UNMASKED AND I UNMASKED AND WE LOOKED AT EACH OTHER AND KNEW. WE KNEW WHAT ANTHONY AND CLEOPATRA, AND ROMEO AND JULIET, AND ALL THE OTHER LOVERS DOWN THROUGH THE AGES KNEW..."

MARIA?

PAUL?



"I TOOK HER BY THE HAND AND PULLED HER AFTER ME THROUGH THE SWIRLING CROWD OF MERRY WOMEN. SHE LAUGHED AND IT WAS LIKE THE TINKLING OF SILVER BELLS..."

PAUL...WHERE ARE YOU TAKING ME? STOP...

I'M GETTING YOU OUT OF HERE BEFORE ONE OF THESE SHOULD BEATS ME TO IT!

"OUTSIDE, MARIA STOPPED, SHYERING... I LOOKED AT HER AND SHE WASN'T LAUGHING ANY MORE. FEAR LURKED IN HER EYES..."

DON'T TALK ABOUT SHOULD, PAUL! I... I DON'T LIKE THEM. I... I'M AFRAID!

HURT I... I'M SORRY, HONEY! I DIDN'T MEAN... I WOULDN'T... WELL, I'LL NEVER MENTION THEM AGAIN!

"I TOOK HER IN MY ARMS AND TRIED TO KISS HER RIGHT THEN AND THERE, AS YOU JUST DID, NORMAN. BUT, AS WITH YOU, SHE'D HAVE NONE OF IT..."

DON'T SAY NO, MARIA. THAT'S WHAT OUR LIPS WERE MADE FOR...

NOT MINE, PAUL! NOT YET! WE... WE DON'T KNOW EACH OTHER...

I'M PAUL HOYT, AND YOU'RE BEAUTIFUL AND NOW THAT WE KNOW EACH OTHER

IF YOU INSIST ON TRYING TO KISS ME, PAUL, I'LL GO BACK INSIDE AND YOU'LL NEVER SEE ME AGAIN!

SO I DIDN'T TRY. I COULDN'T, ALTHOUGH IT WASN'T EASY. THE NEXT EVENING, I TOOK HER TO DINNER. I TRIED TO HOLD HER HAND ACROSS THE TABLE, BUT SHE PULLED IT AWAY BEFORE I COULD TOUCH IT...

NOT EVEN THAT, MARIA?

IT WOULD BE WORTH WITH HOLDING MY HAND... AND THEN A KISS... ANOTHER...

IF YOU'RE PLAYING HARD-TO-GET, IT'S BORING, MARIA. YOU'RE OWING ME MAD!

IF YOU'RE IMPATIENT, PAUL... THERE ARE OTHER GIRLS... MUCH EASIER-TO-KISS GIRLS. PERHAPS YOU'D BETTER FORGET ABOUT ME!

I'M NOT GOING TO FORGET ABOUT YOU, MARIA! I COULDN'T! I WANT YOU! I WANT YOU TO MARRY ME! THERE! I'VE SAID IT! MARRY ME, MARIA!

OH, PAUL! YES, YES, I'LL MARRY YOU... IT... IF MY MOTHER AND FATHER GIVE US PERMISSION! YOU'LL HAVE TO ASK THEM...



"MARIA AND HER PARENTS LIVED IN A LARGE OLD HOUSE OUTSIDE PORT-AU-PRINCE, WHEN I WENT TO SEE THEM THAT NIGHT, THEY SAT STIFFLY ACROSS A DRAWING ROOM THAT MUST HAVE BEEN FURNISHED IN 1880. THEIR ATTIRE FITTED THE SURROUNDINGS."

"I'VE COME TO ASK FOR YOUR PERMISSION TO MARRY YOUR DAUGHTER, MR. AND MRS. HARMON."

"INDEED? AND PRECISELY WHAT ARE YOUR QUALIFICATIONS, MR. HOLT?"

"MY QUALIFICATIONS? I HAD TO CONTROL MYSELF TO KEEP A STRAIGHT FACE. YOU'D THINK I WAS APPLYING FOR A POSITION INSTEAD OF ASKING TO MARRY THEIR DAUGHTER."

"WELL, I HAVE. GUT A BIT OF MONEY, SEE. A GOOD EDUCATION. MY OWN BUSINESS..."

"FINE, MR. HOLT, BUT MORE IMPORTANT: WOULD YOU BE WILLING TO DIE FOR MY DAUGHTER?"



"EVER HIS IDEAS OF GALLANTRY WERE VICTORIAN, I SUPPRESSED MY AMUSEMENT AND GAVE THE ANSWER HE WAS LOOKING FOR."

"I'D GIVE MY LIFE FOR MARIA WITH— OUT A MOMENT'S HESITATION, SIR!"

"AND THEN YOU HAVE OUR PERMISSION, YOUNG MAN?"

"OH, PAUL, I'M SO HAPPY!"

"TO MY SURPRISE, MR. HARMON SAID HE COULD BE MARRIED THE VERY NEXT DAY, SO MARIA AND I WERE WED IN THAT COLD BLEAR CHAMBER BY A LOCAL OFFICIAL."

"I NOW PRODUCE YOU MAN AND WIFE!"

"NOW YOU MAY KISS YOUR BRIDE, SON!"

"MR. HARMON SMILED, BUT MARIA PERMITTED ME TO DO NO MORE THAN BRUSH HER COLO LIPS WITH MINE. I BLAMED IT ON SHYNESS BEFORE HER PARENTS. I AGOED TO CRASH HER IN MY ARM."



"WHEN THE OFFICIAL THAT HAD MARRIED US HAD GONE, MARIA TURNED TO HER FATHER. MR. HARMON TOOK A SMALL SILVER CASE FROM HIS WAISTCOAT POCKET AND REMOVED A SINGLE WHITE TABLET."

"GIVE IT TO ME, YOUNG MAN, I'M PATIENT!"

"HERE, YOUNG MAN! SWALLOW THIS!"

"WHAT IS IT? IT SMELLS FUNNY! MEDICINAL?"

"MARIA LOOKED AT ME REASSURINGLY, AND WHISPERED..."

"SWALLOW IT, PAUL. DARLING! IT'S ALL RIGHT! IT'S STYFOCHNINE!"

"STYFOCHNINE? YOU SAID MR. THAT'S POISON! WHAT'S THE IDEA?"

"YOU SAID YOU'D DIE FOR MY DAUGHTER, PAUL!"



"I DROPPED THE DEADLY LETHAL TABLET AND BACKED OFF. MARIA KNELT AND PICKED IT UP AND TRIED TO GIVE IT BACK TO ME. SHE PRESSED HER HAND IN MINE. HER FLESH WAS COLD... **GOLD AS DEATH**..."

"YOU SAID YOU'D DIE FOR ME, PAUL DEAR... (CHORE!) NOW YOU'VE GOT TO! OUR MARRIAGE CAN NEVER BE CONSUMMATED UNLESS YOU'VE LIVED I AM... LIKE MOTHER AND FATHER... **UNLESS YOU'RE DEAD!**"



"A GLAMMY CHILL CREEPT ACROSS ME LIKE AN INVISIBLE HAND OF HOARFROST. NUMBLY, I MOVED BACKWARDS. THERE WAS A LOOK OF DEADLY GRIM DETERMINATION ON THE FACES OF THE HARBINGERS AS THEY CAME SLOWLY AFTER ME."

"THAT'S WHY I NEVER LET YOU TOUCH ME OR KISS ME, PAUL! YOU'D HAVE FELT MY DEAD FLESH! TAKE THE PILL SO YOU CAN BECOME ONE OF US! I LOVE YOU! I WANT YOU!"

"NO! FOL, LORD, NO!"



"I SCREAMED AND BROKE FOR THE DOOR..."

"**ZOMBIES! I'VE MARRIED INTO A FAMILY OF ZOMBIES!**"



"THE DOOR WAS LOCKED... THE KEY GONE. I WHIRLED, CONFUSED. MY ONLY AVENUE OF ESCAPE WAS UP THE STAIRS..."

"PAUL! I LOVE YOU! I'VE GOT TO HAVE YOU! YOU'VE GOT TO DIE FOR ME TO HAVE YOU!"

"NO! NO!"



"THE DOORS ON THE SECOND FLOOR WERE ALL LOCKED TOO. FOR A MOMENT, THEY TRAPPED ME THERE. THEIR COLD LIFELESS HANDS HOLDING ME IN A STEEL GRIP. BUT WITH A STRENGTH BORN OF SILENT TERROR, I WRENCHED FREE."

"PLEASE, PAUL! PLEASE!"

"OH, LORD..."



"THERE WAS NO TIME TO THINK... ONLY TO RUN. I SAW THE NARROW STAIRWAY LEADING UPWARD AND WITH A WILD FRANTIC SCRAMBLE, I STUMBLED UP INTO A MUSTY DUST-LADEN FOUL-SMELLING ATTIC. I REACHED THE ONE WINDOW IN THE JUNK-DRAWN ROOM, THREW IT OPEN, AND STARED DOWN THREE STORIES TO A BRICK PATIO. I BALANCED BACK AS I CLIMBED TO THE SILL AND SAW MY ZOMBIE WIFE AND IN-LAWS THROUGH A HAZE OF COBWEBS, COMING FOR ME... COMING... AND I HEARD MARIA'S PLEADING VOICE..."

"DON'T JUMP, PAUL! DON'T! YOU'LL CRUSH YOUR BODY... BREAK BONES... TEAR FLESH! I WOULDN'T WANT YOU DEAD THAT WAY..."



NORMAN KING LISTENED IN AMAZEMENT TO THIS TALE OF TERROR THAT Poured FROM THE LIPS OF THE HUSBAND OF THE WOMAN HE WANTED SO DESPERATELY. HE LOOKED DOWN AT THE GUN IN HIS HAND, THE GUN LEVITATED AT PAUL HOLT'S CHEST...

"I GUESS... I GUESS I LEFT THEM GASPING AND! WHAT HAPPENED? MARIA TALKED SENSE! IT WAS NO USE JUMPING! ONE WAY OR THE OTHER..."



PAUL HOLT SPINNED WHIRLY...

"WHAT HAPPENED? WHY THEY KILLED ME, OF COURSE!"

"THEY KILLED..."



SUDDENLY NORMAN HEARD PAUL'S MORTAL LAUGHTER, SAW THE GLINT OF AMUSEMENT IN HIS EYES, AND NORMAN'S FACE FLUSHED SCARLET. HE SEETHED WITH RAGE, HIS FINGER TIGHTENED ON THE TRIGGER...

"DO YOU THINK I'M A FOOL, HOLT? DO YOU THINK I'D BELIEVE THAT BOLT?"

"BELIEVE WHAT YOU LIKE, NORMAN!"



NORMAN SCREAMED IN FURY, HE SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER AGAIN AND AGAIN AS HE SHRIEKED...

"I SAID I'D KILL YOU! AND I MEANT IT! TAKE THAT... AND THAT... AND THAT... AND SHOO..."



THE AUTOMATIC BARRAGED INTO THE NIGHT, FOUR UGLY BLACK HOLES APPEARED IN PAUL'S CHEST. THEY GAYED DRYLY... BURNED BY THE POWDER AT SUCH CLOSE RANGE. BUT THERE WAS NO BLOOD! NORMAN STAGGERED BACK, HIS FACE FROZEN IN AN EXPRESSION OF STARK HORROR...

"YOU'RE DEAD! I SHOT YOU... FOUR TIMES... THROUGH THE HEART! YOU'RE GONNA TO BE DEAD!"

"I TOLD YOU THEY KILLED ME, NORMAN. I AM DEAD... LIKE MY WIFE MARIA..."



PAUL HOLT'S COLD LIFELESS HANDS CAUGHT NORMAN KING'S THROBBING THROAT IN AN ICEY DEATH-GRIP. HIS POWERFUL DEAD FINGERS CLAMPED TIGHTLY, CUTTING OFF NORMAN'S AIR SUPPLY... CUTTING OFF HIS LIFE.

"THEY MADE ME A ZOMBIE, NORMAN! AND NOW, IF YOU WANT MY WIFE SO BADLY... I'LL HAVE TO MAKE YOU ONE, AT LEAST... THEN YOU MIGHT HAVE A SHOT OF A CHANCE..."



"HELLO!" AND THAT'S MY TELL! HARK FOR THIS ISSUE OF C.K.'S PUTTING PERIODICAL. OF COURSE, THE GHOST WAS ON NORMAN... FALLING FOR A COLD BARE LIKE MARIA. BUT EVERYTHING'S ALL RIGHT NOW. NORMAN'S BEEN ACCEPTED INTO ZOMBIE SOCIETY AND MARIA'S PAMPERED HIM OFF ON A DISTANT CRUISE OF HERS. THIS GUY'S BEEN DEAD SO LONG, SHE HAD TO KEEP HER DISTANCE. ANYWAY NORMAN'S HAPPY AS AN UNDERTAKER AT A PLANE CRASH WITH HER. SEEMS HE GOES FOR THE STRONG TYPE... SMELLING THAT IS. AND, TALKING ABOUT STRONG SMELLING, I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO C.K.' BYE, NOW!"





## INSIDE STORY

They couldn't be far behind, Fitch realized. Of all the dumb luck . . . for years he'd snatched parties, and he'd never fumbled so badly as this time! His chest pounding as he rounded the corner, Fitch knew that his two pursuers would be closing in on him in another minute!

He skidded to a stop suddenly. In the empty lot to his right some kids were fooling around an old ice box, which sagged ludicrously atop a mound of rubbish. One punk sat inside the enamel box, while the others yammered, pretending they were about to shut the door. It took Fitch only a moment to see beauty in this sordid scene; the ice box was a better hideout than any other he'd find!

Fitch slammed one kid when he protested against an adult joining their fun . . . the others calmed down fast. Hunching over, Fitch pulled a five-spot from his pocket and the eyes around him grew big with anticipation. Fitch swiftly tore the bill into two pieces. He handed one half of the bill to the skinny kid nearest him. "I'm gonna duck into the ice box, see?" he whispered. "Slam that door shut after I'm in . . . then just keep on playing. You get the other half when you open the door for me!"

While the kids chattered excitedly, Fitch stepped into the box and maneuvered corkscrew fashion till he was able to squat down inside. "Okay!" he called. "When I rap on the side of the box, you open 'er up and get the other half of your reward! Now slam 'er closed!"

A tight fit, Fitch thought, a smile on his face. It was dark, and already the perspiration was beginning to swim down the small of his

back. Bar sitting it out in the ice box was a lot cooler than sweating out a prison sentence!

The air was stale and it was hard to breathe . . . but those cops'd pass by in another moment, and he'd hop out and make a getaway!

While he squatted inside the sealed box, two figures in blue raced around the corner. One of them pointed at the boys in the empty lot. At the same moment, the kids spotted the police. With a yelp of fear, the boys scattered, their legs thrashing frantically as they ran away. "T-They catch us here again," one boy grunted, "and they'll run us in! Last time they warned us to stay outa this lot, or we'd all go to jail!"

In another minute the boys were gone, and the police ran on. The lot was silent. Except for the deep-throated groaning inside the abandoned ice box.

After the footsteps died away outside, Fitch pounded on the enamel side of the box . . . pounded till blood from his slashed knuckles ran down the slick surface. With all his strength he hurled himself against the door, but it held firm.

It was growing hot in the box . . . increasingly hard to breathe. Fitch's fingers ripped his collar open, but it didn't help. There was a curious buzzing in his ears, and he found it painful to keep his eyes open. His heart was beating strangely in his chest, and the white-hot lump in his throat seemed to be growing . . . seemed to be filling his whole muscular body, as if it would soon burst. Just one breath of air, that's all he needed! Let the cops come and take him . . . let them throw him into solitary! Just let him gulp some air, and relieve the agony that was melting his insides! Air . . .





## YOU, TOO, CAN MEET NEW FRIENDS! JOIN THE **E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB!**

SEND FOR YOUR MEMBERSHIP KIT TODAY. RECEIVE A FULL-COLOR 7½ X 10½ ILLUMINATED CERTIFICATE, A STURDY WALLET IDENTIFICATION CARD, A SHAZZY EMBROIDERED SHOULDER PATCH, AND A STUNNING ANTIQUE BRONZE-FINISH BAS-RELIEF PIN.

FOR AN INDIVIDUAL MEMBERSHIP, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IT IN, TOGETHER WITH 25¢. IF FIVE OR MORE OF YOU WISH TO JOIN AS AN AUTHORIZED CHAPTER, ENCLOSE EACH MEMBER'S NAME AND ADDRESS ALONG WITH 25¢ FOR EACH NAME, AND INDICATE THE NAME OF THE ELECTED CHAPTER PRESIDENT. WE WILL NOTIFY EACH PRESIDENT OF HIS CHAPTER NUMBER, EACH MEMBER, CHAPTER OR INDIVIDUAL, WILL RECEIVE HIS KIT DIRECTLY... BY RETURN MAIL!

THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 106  
335 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK, 12, N.Y.

Here's my two bits! I want the things  
and stuff like the kids wearing! I want  
to meet new friends like the kids meeting!  
I'm a fan-addict! I'm mad!

NAME \_\_\_\_\_

ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_

CITY \_\_\_\_\_ PHONE NO. \_\_\_\_\_

STATE \_\_\_\_\_

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

*Flash, huh? Is everybody's "high fidelity" away there days? So who am I to stand in the way of progress? So snap on your ten watt all-voice amplifier, flip on your no-rumble, non-tracking error, four-speed, rock-in-hand record player with the diamond (style) variable reluctance magnetic plug-in pickup head, dust off your bass-reflex cabinet with the infinite baffles containing the twin 12 inch woofers, 6 cross-over networks, and 8 matched-in-series tweeters . . . and lend a shattered ear to the crystal clear needle scratch of these latest additions to the E.C. HORROR HIT PARADE (now arriving you at a flat response from 10 to 24,000 cycles, plus or minus 903 db. at maximum horn-power, maximum horn level at 3600 revolutions per minute!), as sent in by Frank Field of Port Washington, N. Y.; Carl Nelson and Dolores Zaslavski of Detroit, Mich.; Rod Mawson and Jerry Zaslavski of Tulsa, N. J.; 3 Allagany High School Ghasts of Cumberland, Md.; and Paul Black and Douglas Tachman of Elmhurst, L. I.*

MAGGOTS GO WHERE MY FILED  
GUYS GO  
EAT ME IN ST. LOUIS, LOOEY  
STRANGLINGS ARE HAPPENING  
SOME HAIR OVER MY SLAIN BEAU  
YOU MADE ME SHOVE YOU  
I'LL BREAK YOUR BONES AGAIN,  
KATHLEEN  
COMIN THROUGH THE EYE  
DROWNED IN THE VALLEY  
YOU WERE BENT FOR ME  
SNOOK CITY SHREW  
HAGS TO WITCHES  
WHEN YOU AND I WERE YOUNG  
MAGGOTS

*Kathleen O'Brien and Tom Oliver of no address;  
Steve Wilbert of Detroit, Mich.; William Gubi of  
Philadelphia, Pa; and Dem Porcellana of N. Y. C.  
suggest the following PULLETTING PROGRAM:*

HATCHET SQUAD  
BOAST OF THE TOWN  
FOUR SCAR PLAYHOUSE  
YOU BET YOUR WIFE  
PERRY'S IN A COMA  
MR. GIZZARD  
T.V. SCREAM CLUB  
SMILIN' ED'S FANG  
THE PRONE STRANGER  
I LATE THREE WIVES

*Somebody sent in the following LURED LYRICS:*

THE HEARSE WITH THE FRINGE ON TOP  
FROM OKLAHOMACIDE

Ratt and bats and owls better dispense  
When I take you out in this hearse  
When I take you out in the black hearse  
With the fringe on top  
Watch that fringe and see how it dances

As I drive the hearse through the gutter,  
Crazy folks will break through their shutter  
And their jaws will drop.

The driver's dead

The upholstery's skin  
The dash-board'll drive you insane  
With a solid glass bottom

You can look right in  
In case you run over a pedestrian  
Two bright fog-lights out on the fender  
Spurk ash at blood if you go on a bender  
An unemployed mortician who'll service casket  
If you care to flip  
In that true little hearse  
With the fringe on the top

*Al Fuller of Portland, Ore. joins the PERVERTED  
PARODY to the tune of "Fretted"*

Fretted you're draining' when you're blue,  
It isn't very hard to do  
And you'll find blood without an end  
Whenever you proceed  
Remember, anyone can drain  
And nothin's drier if it was wet  
The class you haven't got could be a lot  
If you proceed  
You'll find a body you can share,  
One you can call all your own  
Just close your eyes, blood is there  
You'll never be alone  
And if you sing this melody,  
You'll be preening just like me  
The blood is mine, it can be yours, my friend,  
So why don't you, proceed.

*Gary Kimball of Droper, N. C. sends me flying with  
the FUTRID POETRY:*

I used to be happy with a narrow tag,  
Any old bag, and a drunken rag  
But now, no more,  
For that was before  
I read an E.C. mag!  
Now I'm sad and I post  
Till an issue collect out  
They make me happy, even,  
I EAT AGAIN!

**COMMERCIALS:** This offer expires with this offer!  
Fortunately for public convenience! **THREE DIMEN-  
SIONAL E.C. CLASSICS AND THREE DIMEN-  
SIONAL TALES FROM THE CRYPT OF TERROR**  
... 17c each ... 3 for 50c! Subscriptions to **TALES  
FROM THE CRYPT** ... one back ... eight more!  
Address for more issues of *TALES*, or 3-D mags, or sub-  
orders to:

The Crypt Keeper  
Room 746, Dept. 47  
225 Lafayette St.  
N. Y. 12, N. Y.

**HERE'S A TALE OF BLOODY T.V. PROGRAMING! I CALL THIS DUD...**

# CLOTS MY LINE



THE BLOOMING BLOOM LIGHTS BLAZED WHITE-HOT. THE RED SIGNAL ATOP THE KINESCOPE CAMERA BLINKED ON. GEAR AND CHAINS WITHIN THE CAMERA BEGAN TO WHIRL SOFTLY. ALL THE PREVIOUS BUSTLING AND MAD CONFUSION HAD SUDDENLY COME TO A HUSHED END. THE "CAMMY" T.V. PROGRAM BEGAN, USHERED ONTO TAPE TO BE USED AT SOME FUTURE DATE, BY THE UNCTUOUS, SLAVE VOICE OF ITS MASTER-OF-CEREMONIES, AMON CHATFIELD.



GOOD EVENING, FRIENDS. WELCOME TO OUR NETWORK'S *NEWEST* LAMB...  
**"GUESS THE GUEST"**. A UNIQUE GUESS GAME IN WHICH OUR PANEL  
 WILL ATTEMPT TO GUESS THE OCCUPATION OF OUR INVITED  
 GUEST...

MR. PIERCE GRAYSON SAT BESIDE THE MASTER OF CEREMONIES, SMILING NERVOUSLY. FROM TIME TO TIME HE GLANCED AT THE PANEL SITTING STERNLY ACROSS THE SMALL STUDIO STAGE...



IF OUR PANEL *FAILS* TO NAME THE GUEST'S SECRET OCCUPATION WITHIN THE TIME LIMIT, HE RECEIVES A *VALUABLE* PRIZE...

MR. CHATFIELD NODDED TOWARD THE SLIM THREESOME OPPOSITE...

OUR PANEL IS *NEW* EACH WEEK. **GUESS THE GUEST** IS NOT A *CELEBRITY* PROGRAM. WE BELIEVE IT IS MORE FUN TO HAVE THREE... WELL... *AVERAGE* PEOPLE LIKE *FOUR-SELFIES* MATCH WITS WITH OUR GUEST. TONIGHT, ON OUR PANEL, WE HAVE MR. *RALPH PETERS*, NIGHT WATCHMAN... MISS *GELM PRODRICK*, MOVIE CASHIER... AND MR. *PAUL DUNKEL*, MAINTENANCE MAN...



WOW, PANEL, MEET OUR GUEST...  
MR. PIERCE DRAYNOR. YOUR JOB  
WILL BE TO DISCOVER MR. DRAY-  
NOR'S OCCUPATION... WHAT HE  
DOES? IN OTHER WORDS...  
GUESS THE GUEST? FIRST,  
WE'LL BEGIN WITH THE WILD  
GUESSES! MISS PROMICK?



MR. PIERCE DRAYNOR SAT IN THE  
GUEST SEAT WITH AN AMUSED SMILE.  
GLIDING INSIDE, THEY'D NEVER  
GUESS HIS OCCUPATION. IT WAS  
SOMETHING THEY WOULDN'T EXPECT  
JUST TO LOOK AT HIM...



HIS NEAT OUTER APPEARANCE... HIS  
QUIET VOICE... HIS RATHER BEEK AIR...  
THERE WAS NOTHING OBVIOUS ABOUT  
MR. DRAYNOR THAT WOULD GIVE HIS  
OCCUPATION AWAY. MR. DRAYNOR WAS  
BORN TO ENJOY THIS.



THEY WERE ALL WRONG... SO VERY WRONG. MR. DRAYNOR  
LEERED SLIGHTLY AT THE HUMMING KINESCOPE CAMERA,  
WORKING THE VAST AUDIENCE THAT WOULD VIEW THIS AT  
SOME FUTURE TIME... AND HE REMEMBERED HOW HE'D  
MET MR. CHATFIELD THAT NIGHT LAST WEEK... IN THAT  
CRUMBY LITTLE EAST-SIDE JOE HALL...



WELL, GUESS THE GUEST? IS  
A PANEL PROGRAM. MR. DRAY-  
NOR, OUR PANEL HAS TO GUESS  
YOUR OCCUPATION BY  
KINESCOPE IT! YOU KNOW...  
PUT IT ON TAPE FOR A FUTURE  
REROADCAST OVER OUR NETWORK.



OH, THERE'S NO STUDIO  
AUDIENCE AT A KINESCOPE  
TAPE, MR. DRAYNOR. JUST  
THE PANEL, MYSELF, THE  
CAMERAMAN, AND... YOU!



GOOD? JUST LET ME CHECK MY  
SCHEDULES! YES! FINE!  
WE'LL TAKE YOU NEXT  
TUESDAY NIGHT... AT  
10:30 P.M. HERE'S THE  
ADDRESS, YOU'RE SURE  
YOU'LL COME?



OH, I'LL BE  
THERE, MR. CHATFIELD.  
I WOULDN'T MISS  
THIS FOR ANYTHING.

MR. DRAYNOR'S THOUGHTS RETURNED TO THE PRESENT AS MR. CHATFIELD SMILED...



THEY PASSED FROM ONE TO THE OTHER, NARROWING IT DOWN, GETTING TO THE HEART OF THE MATTER. MR. DRAYNOR HAD HELPED THEM ALONG, SNOWING TO HIMSELF. HE'D WANTED THEM TO GET CLOSE... VERY CLOSE. AND MR. CHATFIELD HAD JUST SAT BACK, SMILING.



THEY LEANED FORWARD, HANGING ON HIS ANSWER. BREATHLESSLY, DRAMATICALLY, DRAYNOR HESITATED. DELIBERATELY, HE LOOKED TO MR. CHATFIELD, WHO SEEMED TO BE ENJOYING THE UNCOMFORTABLE TURN THE QUEST HAD TAKEN. MR. DRAYNOR LICKED HIS LIPS, BEING CAREFUL TO KEEP THEM CAREFULLY CLOSED AS HE ALWAYS DID IN PUBLIC.



THE QUESTIONS BEGAN INNOCENTLY ENOUGH... TOO INNOCENT, MR. DRAYNOR INSTANTLY COULD THEM ON. MR. CHATFIELD SEEMED TO BE ENJOYING THE PROCEEDINGS.



MR. CHATFIELD HAD TOLD MR. DRAYNOR HE COULD ASK HIM OR EMASCULATE HIS YES-OR-NO ANSWERS IF HE CARED TO, SO LONG AS HE DID NOT DELIBERATELY LIE. THAT WAS ALL RIGHT WITH MR. DRAYNOR.



MR. DRAYNOR SAW THE SUDDEN TWITCH OF MISS PRONICK'S LIPS NOW AS A CLUE LEANED INTO HER MIND AND HER EYES WIDENED IN CONSIDERATION. MR. BUNKER PASSED TO HER, HER VOICE WAS HESITANT... FEARFUL.



THE PANEL GASPED IN UNISON, EXCHANGING STARTLED GLANCES. DRAYNOR CHUCKLED SOFTLY, WHISPERING THAT OLD CLUE TO MR. CHATFIELD WHO NODDED HAPPILY.



DESPERATELY THEY HURLED QUESTIONS AT HIM, HOPING THEY WERE WRONG AT WHAT THEY SUSPECTED...



PETERS SEEMED TO BE MENTALLY GAGGED, MAKING THE DIRECT QUESTION LIKE SOME HORRIBLE BLIND LYING BEFORE HIM...



THE GRINNING, BLOATING GUEST CHOSE HIS WORDS CAREFULLY, FOR THEIR FULLEST AND MOST SATIRIZING MEANING. IT WAS SO DELIGHTFUL, WATCHING THE PANEL SWEAT AND GLOOM...



IT WAS DUNNELL'S TURN AGAIN, BUT HE WAS STILL AFRAID TO COME OUT WITH IT OPENLY. HE TRIED TO APPROACH IT IN A ROUNDABOUT WAY, LIKE A FEARFUL MAN SKIRTING THE EDGE OF A DEEP, DEADLY PIT...



THEY WERE ALL BEATING AROUND THE BUSH, AFRAID TO NAME THE RIDICULOUS OCCUPATION TORTURING THEIR NIMES. MISS PROMICK LOOKED POSITIVELY ILL AS SHE STAMMERED...



MR. CHATFIELD'S EYES GLEAMED AS HE WARNED THE PANEL OF THE FLEETING TIME. IT WAS THE TRIUMPH HE'D PLANNED ALL ALONG. THAT'S WHY HE'D INVITED MR. GRAYNOR AT RIGHT. IT ALL FIT IN SO NICELY. QUITE ALOVELY TORTURING THIS...



THE PANEL BRUNK NOW AS DRAYNOR LEERED AT THEM, MOCKING THEM, DEFTING THEM... DARING THEM TO PIN HIM DOWN. MR. CHATFIELD SAT BACK, WONDERING IF THEY'D HAVE THE NERVE...



MR. DRAYNOR GIGGLED. MR. CHATFIELD LOOKED SURPRISED...



MR. CHATFIELD LAUGHED...



MR. CHATFIELD TURNED TO MR. DRAYNOR...



...THIS SOLID OAK HAND HEFTY TON LINED, BRASS NAILED CABINET... FOR YOU TO REST IN ETERNAL REPOSE FOREVERMORE...



A CABINET?? SAY! WHAT KIND OF A PROGRAM IS THIS?



...VAST MANUFACTURER OF  
RED INK!



MR. DRAYNOR LAUGHED OUT LOUD,  
FORGETTING TO HIDE HIS POOR  
TEETH, BEHIND HIS FINGERHILL...

DRAYNOR: YES!  
THAT'S RIGHT!  
PLAIN OLD  
RED INK!

CHAFFIELD: WE  
THOUGHT  
YOU'D  
BEHIND  
US...



DRAYNOR'S LAUGH CHOKED AND DIED.  
THE MEMBERS OF THE PANEL WERE  
RISING FROM THEIR SEATS... COMING  
TOWARD HIM.

ANTON! HOW  
COULD YOU!  
LETTING US  
SQUIRM  
THROUGH THE  
WHOLE AWFUL  
THING.

OH, I COULDN'T  
RESIST! WHEN  
I FOUND OUT  
WHAT HE DID, I  
JUST COULDN'T  
RESIST!



CHAFFIELD ROSE, STANDING OVER DRAYNOR. AND THE  
CAMERAMAN, TOO, LEFT HIS WHIRLING MECHANISM TO  
JOIN THE GIGGLING PANEL MEMBERS AS THEY GLIDED  
TOWARD THEIR INVITED GUEST....

I KNEW YOU'D THINK, FOR  
ONE HORRIBLE MINUTE, THAT  
HE WAS ONE OF US!

GOOD LORD!



THEY LOOKED OVER THE INK MANUFACTURER, HEMMING  
HIM IN, THEIR SHARP FANGS GLISTENING IN THE WHITE  
LIGHT FROM THE HOT KLEGGES...



YOU SEE, MR. DRAYNOR! OH, NO! NO!  
WE ARE THE FAM-  
PINKS!

MR. DRAYNOR FLAILED AS THEY BENT OVER HIM, SINKING THEIR NEEDLE-  
SHARP FANGS INTO HIS FLESH... SUCKING... GULPING... DRAWING THE SCAR-  
LET LIFE-FLUID FROM HIS WEAKENED BODY. AND JUST BEFORE THE DARK-  
NESS CLOSED IN, DRAYNOR HEARD MR. CHAFFIELD ROSE, WITH HIS BLOODY  
MOUTH, AND CLOSE THE "CANNED" SHOW...



BE SURE TO BE WITH US NEXT WEEK  
WHEN "GUESS THE GUEST" IS PRESENTED  
BY THE SUPERNATURAL PRIVATE-TV  
NETWORK. OUR PROGRAM AT THAT  
TIME, WILL CONSIST OF A PANEL OF  
THREE AVERAGE GHOULS AND  
ANOTHER UNSUSPECTING  
INVITED GUEST...

HEY, NEW GUTE IDEA, OH, YES, YES...  
HAVING A PRIVATE-TV NETWORK  
FOR THE GRAVEYARD GALLERY!  
OF COURSE, IT'S BROADCAST OVER  
U.H.F. THAT'S ULTRA-HORRIBLE  
FREQUENCIES! IN COLOR, TOO!  
ALL PRETTY FLESH-CHERMON AND  
BLOOD-RED! AS FOR POOR MR.  
DRAYNOR... WELL, WE GOT TO USE  
THE PRICE HE'D WON! SOONER THAN  
WE EXPECTED, TOO! AND NOW, THE  
OLD WITCH WAITS WITH HER



WORLD'S BEEN  
COOKING IN HER  
CRUDDY CALL-  
DROUN' BY THE  
WAY! DID YOU  
JOIN THE E.C.  
FAM-ASPECT  
CLUB YET?  
LOOPY! THE MORE



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEY, HEY! AND NOW, IT'S DELIRIUM DESSERT TIME IN C.K.'S MORNING MUCK-NUG... AND YOUR SHROUDER - JERIC, YOUR FEESTERING FRAPPE-FEEDER, YOUR SORDID SUNDAY-SLOPPER, THE OLD WITCH, IS READY TO DISH OUT HER LATEST COOL CAULDRON CONCOCTION... A DELIGHTFULLY ENJOYABLE TALE OF EVIL, EMBROIDERY AND CREEPY OROGNETING AND NAUSEATING KNITTING WHICH I CALL...

## ACCIDENTS and OLD LACE

THE STILL NIGHT OUTSIDE THE BOARDING HOUSE WAS SUDDENLY SHATTERED BY THE SICKENING IMPACT OF TWO TONS OF METAL AND RUBBER AND GLASS AND FLESH MEETING A SOLID WALL OF BRICK AND CONCRETE. THE PAINFUL SCREAMING OF BRAKES PRECEDING THE CRASH STILL ECHOED INTO THE NIGHT AS THE ROOMERS POURED OUT ONTO THE PORCH AND DOWN THE WOODEN STEPS. ERIC HOLMBORN JOINED THEM AS THEY RUSHED TO THE MESS OF TWISTED FENDERS AND PULVERIZED WHEELS, TORN MUSCLES AND SHATTERED BONE, AND THICK BLOOD THAT OOOZED FROM THE WRACK AND POOLED LIKE A SCARLET LAKE UPON THE COLD SIDEWALK.



ERIC HOLMBORN STOOD BEHIND THE THREE OLD LADIES THAT SHARED THE HUSBAND NEXT DOOR TO HIS. HE WATCHED WITH SATISFACTION AS THEIR MOUTHS DROPPED OPEN DUMBLY AND THEIR EYES GLAZED IN HORROR AND THE COLOR DRAINED FROM THEIR AGED AND WRINKLED FACES AS THEY BEHELD THE DEATH SCENE. AND ERIC HOLMBORN SMILED...



HE WATCHED THEM TURN IN DREAD AND REVOLUTION AND SCURRY LIKE OYSTERS OVER THE BOARDING HOUSE LEARN TO THE SAFETY AND SANCTITY OF THE IMPROVING STRUCTURE THAT HAD BEEN THEIR HOME FOR THE PAST TWELVE YEARS...



AND HE KNEW THAT SOON HE WOULD HAVE ANOTHER FABULOUS TRAPEZOID TO SELL TO HIS FRIEND, MILTON... A TAPESTRY WOVEN FEVERISHLY BY THREE PAIRS OF SHAKLED AND BERTHOUS HANDS GUIDED BY THREE PAIRS OF MILKY BLOODSHOT EYES THAT HAD LOOKED UPON THE HORROR OF VIOLENT ACCIDENTAL DEATH...



AS THE HASTILY SUMMONED AMBULANCE SCREAMED UP TO THE CRASH SCENE IN ITS USELESS MERCY TRIP, ERIC HOLBEN CAVED HIMSELF INTO A RICKETY PORCH ROOMER AND THROBT BACK TO THE BEGINNING OF ALL THIS... TO THAT VERY FIRST DAY HE'D COME TO THE BOARDING HOUSE...



OF COURSE, MR. HOLBEN I HAVE A VERY AGEE ROOM VACANT. FIFTEEN A WEEK... WITH MEALS...

I'LL TAKE IT, MRS. CARTER.

ERIC HAD BEEN AN ART DEALER BACK IN NEW YORK. HE'D HAD A SMALL GALLERY BUT IT HAD NEVER BEEN VERY SUCCESSFUL. THE ARTISTS THAT HAD COME TO HIM WITH THEIR CANVASES AND SCULPTURINGS HAD NOT BEEN TOO GOOD. HE'D BEEN FORCED TO CLOSE THE GALLERY AFTER A WHILE. PEOPLE HAD STOPPED COMING TO BUY...

LADIES AND GENTLEMEN, WE HAVE A NEW ADDITION TO OUR LITTLE FAMILY! THIS IS MR. ERIC HOLBEN...

YOU'RE JUST IN TIME FOR DINNER, MR. HOLBEN?



SO ERIC HAD COME TO MILLVILLE TO BEGIN AGAIN. HE'D HAD NOTHING SPECIFIC IN MIND. HE'D JUST PACKED HIS THINGS IN NEW YORK AND TAKEN A TRAIN WEST. AND WHEN HE'D BECOME TIRED OF BEING, HE'D BOTTEN OFF. AND IT'D BEEN AT MILLVILLE...

OH, I'M SORRY! THIS IS GRADE... AND CHARLOTTE... AND EMMA LOU SALSBUURY. THEY LIVE IN THE ROOM NEXT DOOR TO YOURS...

HOW DO YOU DO, LADIES?



ERIC HAD NODDED ASSENTED TO THE THREE OLD LADIES AND FICKED AT HIS FOOD. HIS THOUGHTS A MILLION MILES AWAY. WHAT COULD HE DO NOW THAT HE'D COME TO MILLVILLE? HOW LONG COULD HE LAST UNTIL HIS MONEY RAN OUT?

WHAT DO YOU DO, MR. HOLBEN? I MEAN, WHAT BUSINESS ARE YOU IN?

WHY... I USED TO BE AN ART DEALER, MRS. CARTER!



GRADE? CHARLOTTE? EMMA LOU? DID YOU HEAR? MR. HOLBEN IS AN ART DEALER. YOU MUST SHOW HIM YOUR TAPESTRIES!

TAPESTRIES? WHY, I...

OH, MR. HOLBEN WOULDN'T BE INTERESTED, JANET!



THE GIRLS ARE SAY, MR. HOLBEN. THEY WOVE WONDERFUL TAPESTRIES. AFTER DINNER, YOU MUST SEE THEM...

IT'D BE DELIGHTED.

HED AGREED TO LOOK AT THE SALSBUURY SISTERS' WORK MERELY AS A CONDEMNATION... TO AVOID WOUNDING THEM. AND THE ONE THEY'D SHOWN HIM HAD BEEN JUST WHAT HED EXPECTED.

IT'S VERY PRETTY! PURE CRAFTSMANSHIP! GOOD GOLDFER... AH.

IS IT WORTH ANYTHING, MR. HOLBEN?

BUT THEN, HED SPIED THE TAPESTRY THAT HAD BEEN ROLLED UP AND ALMOST HIDDEN FROM VIEW AND HED ABSENTLY TAKEN IT OUT OF THE CLOSET AND SPREAD IT OPEN.

I REALLY CAN'T SAY, MRS. CARTER. TAPESTRIES LIKE THAT ARE... ARE... WHO MADE THIS?

GRACE? OH, DEAR!

THE SALSBUURY SISTERS HAD SNATCHED THE TAPESTRY FROM ERIC AND ROLLED IT UP AGAIN, APOLOGIZING.

THIS ONE'S NOT A VERY GOOD EXAMPLE OF OUR WORK!

NO GOOD AT ALL!

WE INTENDED TO DESTROY IT!

NO?

BUT THE BRIEF VIEW HED HAD OF IT HAD BEEN ENOUGH. ERIC HOLBEN HAD WAITED ALL HIS LIFE FOR THAT MOMENT.

WHEN DID YOU MAKE THAT ONE? THAT ONE IS GOOD! THAT TAPESTRY IS A WORK OF ART... AN EXPRESSION OF SHEER GENIUS...

THIS...?

THIS ONE?

SLEEPFISHLY, THE SISTERS HAD UNROLLED THE TAPESTRY AGAIN. ERIC'S HEART HAD RACED IN HIS CHEST. HIS EYES HAD MOVED SLOWLY OVER THE MINUTE STITCHES... THE DREAMY SOMBER COLORS... THE EMOTIONAL SWIRLING COMPOSITION. HED REACHED OUT, AS IN A DREAM, AND TOUCHED HIS DREAM, AND HIS DREAM HAD BEEN REAL.

THIS... IS ART? THIS... IS GOOD?

WE... WE MADE THAT WHEN MR. GOLDEN WHO KILLED? REMEMBER, GIRLS?

YES, THAT'S IT? I REMEMBER.

HE WAS HIT BY A CAR...

DROWN BY THE CORNER?

WE SAW THE WHOLE THING! IT WAS AWFUL! THE BLOOD? THE TWISTED BODY POON MR. GOLDEN? WE MADE THIS THAT VERY NIGHT!



YES, THAT WAS THE BEGINNING OF IT. ERIC HAD TAKEN THE TREASURY TO NEW YORK, TO AN ART DEALER FRIEND OF HIS...JUST TO CHECK ON HIS OWN JUDGEMENT.

THIS IS ADOO, ERIC! WHO DID IT? CAN YOU GET MORE? EXCELLENT! SUCH EXPRESSION... SUCH EMOTION!

HOW MUCH IS IT WORTH, MILTON?

I'LL GIVE YOU FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS FOR IT!

AND IF I CAN GET MORE FOR YOU?

I'M SURE I'LL BE ABLE TO SELL THEM TO THIS PARTY I HAVE IN MIND. I'LL BUY ALL YOU CAN GET. IF THEY'RE AS GOOD AS THIS ONE, FOR FIVE HUNDRED DOLLARS EACH!

IT'S A DEAL, MILTON! WRITE OUT A CHECK! AND I'LL BE BACK SOON, WITH OTHERS!

SO ERIC HAD COME BACK AND TOLD THE SISTERS

FIFTY DOLLARS EACH. DEARY! THAT'S AN AWFUL LOT OF MONEY! AND THIS IS ALL FOR US?

I HAD TO FIGHT FOR IT, BUT HE FINALLY CAKE IN! AND HE WANTS MORE!

MORE?

BUT WE HAVE NO MORE LIKE THAT! WE MADE OTHERS BUT WE DESTROYED THEM!

OH, NO! THEN YOU'VE GOT TO MAKE THEM OVER!

WE COULDN'T! WE WOULDN'T BE INSPIRED!

INSPIRED? WE MADE TAPESTRIES LIKE THAT ONLY AFTER WE'VE BEEN A VIOLENT ACCIDENTAL DEATH!

THE ONE WE MADE AFTER FATHER DIED WAS OUR FIRST! HE PULL REMEMBR THE WHEELS OF A TRAIN!

AND WE MADE SIX AFTER THAT! MR. GOLDEN'S WAS OUR LATEST! WE DESTROYED THE OTHERS!

THEN, IF I COULD SHOW YOU TO THE SCENE OF AN ACCIDENTAL DEATH, YOU'D BE INSPIRED, RIGHT?

IF WE SAW THE BODY?

AND THE BLOOD?

IT HAD BEEN MAGGERS! ERIC HAD HAD TO BUY A RADIO WITH A POLICE WAVELENGTH BAND, HE SAT, NIGHT AFTER NIGHT, IN HIS ROOM... LISTENING... LISTENING...

CAR 23! CAR 23! GO TO NORTH AND MAIN! SAID ACCIDENT - ONE DEAD. TWO HURT! CAR 23! CAR 23! GO TO!

CHARLOTTE! BRACE! EMMA LOO! HURRY! IT'S RIGHT NEARBY!

WHEN ONE OF THOSE PEN AND FAR BETWEEN CALLS HAD COME IN, HE'D RUSHED THE OLD DALLS TO THE SPOT. MORE OFTEN THAN NOT, THEY'D ARRIVE TOO LATE.

OH, THE BODY'S COVERED UP!

WE CAN'T SEE!

WHAT? STAND BACK, YOU! IF I UNCOVER...

BUT THERE'D BEEN THOSE FORTY-NINE TIMES WHEN THEY'D ARRIVED BEFORE THE POLICE. THE SISTERS HAD GAWPED AND GAWPED AND ERIC HAD KNOWN HE'D HAVE HIS TAPESTRY BY MORNING...

WELL, IT'S ABOUT TIME! MY SQUID WAS RUNNING OUT!



THREE TIMES, FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLARS HAD GONE INTO ERIC'S POCKET WHILE THE SISTERS HAD RECEIVED BUT ONE NINTH THAT AMOUNT...

THIRTY... FORTY... FIFTY... THERE YOU ARE!

OH, MR. HOLBENT! YOU'RE SO GOOD TO US!

IF ONLY THERE WERE MORE ACCIDENTS, WE COULD MAKE MORE TAPESTRIES!



AND THEN IT HAD SUDDENLY OCCURRED TO ERIC! MORE ACCIDENTS! OF COURSE! WHY HADN'T HE THOUGHT OF THAT BEFORE! IF THERE WEREN'T ENOUGH ACCIDENTS... HE COULD CAUSE THEM! OF COURSE!...

GOING INTO MILLVILLE!

SURE! HOP IN!



SO TONIGHT, HE'D WALKED A SHORT DISTANCE OUT OF TOWN AND HE'D THUMBED A RIDE AND BEEN PICKED UP. AND WHEN HIS POOR UNSUSPECTING VICTIM'D LOOKED THE OTHER WAY...



HE'D DRIVEN THE CAR TO THE STREET WHERE THE BOARDING HOUSE STOOD, PLACED THE UNCONSCIOUS US MAN'S FOOT ON THE ACCELERATOR, RELEASED THE EMERGENCY BRAKE, AND HOPPED FROM THE CAR...



THE CAR HAD SPED DOWN THE STREET CRAZILY, GATHERING SPEED. THEN IT'D SPIN OUT OF CONTROL AND FLOWED EXPLOSIVELY INTO THE BRICK WALL.



AND HE'D WAITED FOR THE SISTERS TO COME FROM THE HOUSE, TO SEE THE LACERATED FLESH, THE PROTRUDING BONE, THE GRIPPING BLOOD.



AND NOW HE SAT UPON THE PORCH RECKER WAIT... WHILE, UPSTAIRS, A LIGHT BLOODED IN THE WEAVING SISTERS' ROOM.



"MIGHT AS WELL GO UP AND SEE HOW THEY'RE DOING!"

ERIC ENTERED THE BOARDING HOUSE AND CLIMBED THE STAIRS. MRS. CARTER AND HER OTHER ROOM-ERD HAD LONG SINCE GONE TO BED AND NOW LAY ENDURING TROUBLED DREAMS OF WHAT THEY'D WITNESSED EARLIER. HE KNOCKED SOFTLY...



"WHO IS IT?" "IT'S ME, ERIC! I CAME TO MURDER!"

THE DOOR OPENED SLOWLY. ERIC ENTERED. HE LOOKED AROUND. THE CLOTH TRACKED TRULY TO THE TAP-ESTRY-STRETCHER WAS BARE WHITE AND QUITE BLANK.



"WHAT'S GOING ON? YOU HAVEN'T DONE ANYTHING!" "WE COULDN'T DO ANYTHING!" "SOMETHING IS WRONG!"

ERIC BREW ANGRY. HE THOUGHT OF MILTON WRITING IN NEW YORK, WITH HIS CUSTOMER'S HUNGRY FOR MORE TAPES-TRIES. HE THOUGHT OF THE FOUR HUNDRED AND FIFTY DOLLARS AND THE GOOD TIMES IT WOULD BUY. AND HE SHOUTED...



"WASNT THAT ACCIDENT GOOD ENOUGH? DIDN'T YOU SEE THE BODY AND THE BLOOD? WHAT ARE YOU WAITING FOR? START WEAVING!" "WE'RE NOT INSPIRED!" "WE WERENT MOVED!"

ERIC SAW THE FIVE HUNDRED DOLLAR CHECK FLYING AWAY ON WIND OF TEMPERAMENT. HE SCREAMED...



"LOOK! I DIDN'T FINGER HIM! MURDER!" "OH, DEAR! SO THAT'S IT?" "GOLD FOR NOTHING? I DIDN'T FLY IF SO HIS CAR WOULD SLAM AGAINST THAT WALL AND FOLD UP LIKE THAT FOR NOTHING! I DIDN'T COMMIT MURDER FOR NOTHING!"

THE OLD LADIES LOOKED AT EACH OTHER IN SHOCKED BEMUDGERMENT, THEY TURNED TO ERIC AMERLY.



IT'S GOT TO BE AN ACCIDENT... OR ELSE IT'S NOT ART GOOD!

YOU TRIED TO TRICK US!

MURDER ISN'T FAIR!

THEY CAME AT HIM SUDENLY, SLIDING ON AGED LEGS, FONDLING THE INSTRUMENTS OF THEIR ART, THE SCISSORS AND THE LONG SHARP NEEDLES.

IT'S GOT TO BE AN ACCIDENT... LIKE WHEN WE PUSHED FATHER UNDER THE TRAIN...

OR LIKE WHEN WE PUSHED MR. GOLDEN IN FRONT OF THAT CAR...

ON THE OTHERS WE SO CLEVERLY MANAGED WHILE YOU WERE LISTENING TO YOUR STUPID LITTLE RADIO.



THEY STOOD OVER HIM LIKE THE THREE WITCHES IN MACBETH... THEN THEIR LIVING, WRITHING CAULDRON.



IT CAN'T BE MURDER!

IT'S GOT TO BE A VIOLENT ACCIDENT!

LIKE WHAT IS GOING TO HAPPEN TO YOU!

MRS. CARTER AND HER ROOMMATES IN THEIR TROUBLED SLEEPS, BUT NEVER HEARD THE MUFFLED SCREAMS THAT CAME FROM THE BLOWING DISTANCE... NEVER HEARD THE SNIPING OF THEIR SCISSORS... THE CLICKING OF THEIR NEEDLES... THEIR GIGGLES OF SATISFACTION.

PRETTY, ENNA... EHEHEH! SN-HAH! LOU! PRETTY!



AND WHEN ERIC'S FRIEND MILTON STEPPED FORWARD IN HIS GALLERY TO MEET THE THREE ANGLY-LOOKING OLD LADIES WHO DEEDED WITH THEIR LONG ROUND JACKKNIFE, HE NEVER DREAMED OF THE HORRORS THEY WERE CAPABLE OF WEAVING...



NOT UNTIL THEY UNROLLED THEIR LATEST TAPESTRY OF CROCHETED VEINS AND EMBROIDERED ARTERIES AND BURN MUSCLES AND TENDONS AND FINGER-NAILS AND HAIR AND TACKED-DOWN EYEBALLS AND EARS AND STUNG-UP BONES AND CARTILAGE...



CRONE.

HEE-HEE! YEP! THE THREE OLD BOSES WERE HOTTS, ALL RIGHT. JUST LIKE ALL ARTISTS, INCLUDING THE GATTY-BOYS AT E.E. PHILL. THEY MUST BE GATTY TO DRAW THIS TRASH, HEH-HEH! AND TALKING ABOUT CRAZY PEOPLE, THIS WOULD BE P.K.'S. WAS WHICH YOU MURDER? HOT-HEH! AND ANYBODY WHO BUYS THIS NAUSEATING HORRORSCHE MUST BE AS BAD OFF AS THE CREeps WHO DRAW IT. WELL, I GOTTA GO NOW. I GOTTA LEAD MY IDIOT EDITORS BACK TO THEIR PADDED CELLS, SEE YOU NEXT IN THE VAULT OF HORROR! "SEE YOU"



IT WAS A WORK OF ART, ALL RIGHT, IT WAS ERIC GOLDEN. ALL OVER!

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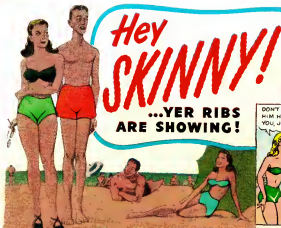
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## FOREVER AMBERGRIS

HEH! STANKE'S THE NAME. CAPTAIN MATT STANKE, SKIPPER OF THE FREIGHTER SOLEFANA. I'M ASHORE NOW... HAPPY TO BE TAKIN' MY BASE ON THIS PLUSH SOFA JONK IN THIS NEAT LITTLE HARBOR-APARTMENT... SLOWLY BILLOWS OF COOL BLUE SMOKE FROM THIS HAWMA FIFTY-CENTER... AN' DREAMIN' OF HOW I'LL SOON BE MASTER OF THE TRIMMEST LITTLE SAIL IN THIS OR ANY PORT. I'M HAPPY 'CAUSE I LOVE EILEEN ENOUGH TO HAVE MISDETERED A MAN T' GET NEAR AND NOW...

SHE'S MINE...



YEAH! THAT'S RIGHT! I MURDERED. AND THERE IS NOTHING ANYONE CAN DO ABOUT IT. NOW, I'VE GOT THE MONEY. I'M RICH. AN' I'M WAITIN' FOR EILEEN T' COME OUT OF HER ROOM SO'S I'LL HAVE E'VERYTHIN'! SCUSE ME...



HEY, EILEEN! BLAST IT! HURRY UP! STOP FORTYIN' ME. I'VE BEEN DRESSIN' AN' COMIN' OUT OR I'LL COME IN THERE AN' GET YOU. READY OR NOT?



WAIT! YOU SEE HER? SHE'S BEAUTIFUL! GOT THE PRETTIEST FACE IN THE WORLD! AN' HER FIGURE. WELL, JUST WAIT AN' SEE! I'D RATHER T'BE HAPPY, BUT SOMETHIN' KEEPS HANGIN' AT ME. KEEPS BOTHERIN' ME!



I CAN'T FIGURE OUT WHY THAT WHALE THREW UP RIGHT THERE AND THEN. JUST WHEN I WAS WATCHIN' HIM. I NEVER SAW A WHALE DISGROSS BEFORE. NOR HAVE I HEARD OF ANYONE ELSE THAT'S SEEN IT HAPPEN.



NOW THERE'S A queer combination of things for a man in love t'be thinkin' of... A **BORDEAU** WOMAN AND A **WHALE SPIN**. BUT I CAN'T HELP IT. I GOT THE SAME OLD FEELIN' IN MY INWARDS AS I GET WHEN MY SHIP IS NEARIN' A REEF IN A THICK FOG. I CAN'T SEE THE REEF BUT INSTINCT TOLLS ME IT'S THERE...



AN' SOME KIND OF CRAZY INSTINCT IS HANGIN' AT ME RIGHT NOW. MAYBE YOU CAN HELP ME. LET ME TELL YOU 'BOUT EILEEN AND ME... AND MY SHIP... AND THE WHALE... AN' THE MAN I MURDERED.



BUT WHERE TO BEGIN ON THAT WARM SPRING MORNING, I RECKON, WAS THE **START** OF IT? WE'D DROPPED ANCHOR HERE IN SAN DIEGO AND ME AND MY FIRST MATE, BEN HARPER, WERE HURRYIN' DOWN THE GANG-PLANK...



I WANT YOU TO HUNK WITH US THIS TIME, CAP'TN. I WANT YOU T' MEET EILEEN!

ANOTHER TIME, MATEY! I GOT SOME GOOD ADDRESSSES IN DIEGO...

FOR SEVEN MONTHS...FROM THE TIME BEN HARPER'D SIGNED ON MY SHIP. ALL I'D HEARD FROM HIM WAS EILEEN...HOW BEAUTIFUL THIS BRIDE OF HIS WAS. AND NOW I HAD TO MEET HER...



WITH BEN HARPER BEIN' THE KIND OF A CHAP HE WAS... NOT AT ALL ON THE RUSSIED SIDE...AND NOT MUCH ON LOOKS EITHER...I NEVER FIGURED HIM TO HAVE LANDED ANYTHING LIKE THE BEAUTY THAT GREETED HIM WHEN HE REACHED THEIR APARTMENT...



OH, MONEY. I THOUGHT THIS TRIP WOULD NEVER END!

IT'S GOOD TO HAVE YOU HOME, BEN, DARLING...

"BUT I COULD SEE FROM THE WAY THAT SHE TURNED HER HEAD SO'S HE COULDN'T KISS HER ON THE LIPS THAT EILEEN WASN'T AS GLAD TO SEE HIM AS SHE MADE OUT. FACT IS, AS HE WAS LOVIN' HER, SHE KEPT LOOKIN' PAST HIM TO ME..."

"SHE KEPT LOOKIN' AT ME... TALKIN' WITH HER EYES... FIRST CURIOSITY, THEN AN INVITATION... YELDING IT WAS AN ELECTRIC THING THAT PASSED BETWEEN US... SOMETHING WE BOTH UNDERSTOOD IN THOSE FIRST QUICK MOMENTS WITHOUT HAVING SPOKEN A WORD..."

"BEN INTRODUCED US, BUT I FELT I ALREADY KNEW HER BETTER'N HE DID. I FOLLOWED THEM INTO THE LIVING ROOM, WATCHIN' EILEEN, TALKIN' IN PARTS MOVIN' SENSUOUSLY. THERE WERE PICTURES BURNIN' IN MY BRAIN, TATTOOED WITH A WHITE HOT NEEDLE..."

"MATT'N SPOKE TO HAVE DINNER WITH US, HOM... BUT HE WON'T STAY ON WITH US. HE'S GOT OTHER PLANS..."



"BEN MOVED OFF TOWARDS THE KITCHEN..."

"SEE IF YOU CAN'T DO SOMETHIN' ABOUT GETTIN' MATT TO *STAY* WITH US WHILE I GOOK-UP SOME *DRINKS*..."

"SURE, BEN..."



"EILEEN DID SOMETHIN', ALL RIGHT. SHE MOVED TOWARDS ME, SLOWLY, HER HIPS SWAYIN' EVER SO EASY. SHE KEPT LOOKIN' AT ME WITH THOSE SOFT, INVITIN' EYES, AND THEN SHE SPOKE WITH THAT SOFT, MELLOW, HONEY-PEELED, EXCITING VOICE..."

"YOU... WILL... STAY... ON... WITH... US... WON'T YOU, MATT?"

"... I... I..."



"SEVEN MONTHS AT SEA WITHOUT SO MUCH AS *SLEEPIN'* A WOMAN MAKES A MAN ACT WITHOUT THINKIN', I GUESS. I HAD A FRENZIED IMPULSE TO THROW MY ARMS AROUND EILEEN... PULL HER TIGHT AGAIN' ME... CRUSH MY HUNGRY LIPS AGAIN' HERS. AND SUDDENLY I WAS *GON'* IT?..."

"SHE PULLED BACK AT FIRST, THEN CHANGED HER MIND, AND MOVED IN TIGHT. SHE MELTED... BLENDED... LIKE WE WERE ONE. THAT'S HOW QUICK WE HIT IT OFF TOGETHER. EILEEN AND ME? I WAS PARTIN' HEAVY AND WIPIN' HER LIPSTICK WHEN SHE TENSED..."

"WHY'D YOU DO THAT, MATT?"



"SHE KNEW WHY I DID IT, THE TANTALIZING DEVIL, SO I GAVE HER A FLIP HAMMER JUST AS BEN, POOR, STUPID, LOVESICK BEN, CAME IN WITH THE DRINKS."

"...I HAVEN'T HAD A CHANCE TO KISS THE BRIDE BEFORE THIS!"

"HAH! I TOLD YOU YOU'D LIKE EILEEN. CAPN! SO ON, BE MY GUEST."

"ER... I... I THINK I'VE TALKED MATT INTO STAYING, BEN..."

"I GAVE EILEEN A BASHFUL PECK ON THE CHEEK AND BEN GRINNED, PLEASED AS PUNCH THAT I WAS PLEASED WITH HIS WIFE. PLEASED?" I WAS CRAZY ABOUT HER... TORTURED 'CAUSE BEN WAS ALWAYS CLOSE BY IN THE DAYS THAT FOLLOWED. BUT THEN, ONE DAY, I GOT A CHANCE TO TALK TO EILEEN..."

"WHY'D YOU MARRY HIM? YOU DON'T LOVE HIM!"

"THAT'S PUTTING IT BLUNTLY, ISN'T IT? WELL, I'LL GIVE YOU A BLUNT ANSWER! SECURITY!"

"BEN MAKES GOOD MONEY! HE NEVER SPENT MUCH BEFORE HE GOT MARRIED! HE WANTS SECURITY TO ME, MATT... A nice HOME... CLOTHES... FOOD... EVEN THIS LITTLE CAP..."

"AND NOW, NOW THAT YOU'VE MET ME? I CAN SEE THE WAY YOU LOOK AT ME. YOU'RE IN LOVE WITH ME!"

"I DO LOVE YOU, MATT! I'VE NEVER MET A MAN I LOVED SO MUCH! BUT I WANT THE THING BEN'S MONEY GETS FOR ME..."

"AND I WANT YOU, EILEEN. I'M GOIN' TO HAVE YOU SOMEDAY, TOO! I DON'T KNOW NOW BUT I WILL! I SWEAR IT..."

"THE TWO WEEKS WENT BY AND IT WAS TIME TO SHOVE OFF AGAIN. I SAW EILEEN ONCE MORE THE WAY I DID THAT FIRST DAY... WITH BEN'S ARMS AROUND HER... SHE LOOKED OVER HIS SHOULDER, BUT THIS TIME, WHAT SHE SAID WAS MEANT FOR ME..."

"BE GOOD... GOODBYE, DARLING! I'LL BE COUNTING EVERY SECOND TILL YOU COME BACK TO ME..."

"AND LATER, BEN AND I STOOD ON THE BRIDGE OF THE SULTANA, WATCHING BEN DISAPPEAR INTO THE MIST. THERE WAS NO TALKIN' BETWEEN US... ONLY OUR QUIET THOUGHTS... HIM REMEMBERING THOSE SMOKE NIGHTS WITH EILEEN... AND ME, HATTIN' HIM FOR THEM, KNOWIN' IT WAS ME SHE WANTED..."

"AND I MADE UP MY MIND RIGHT THEN THAT MY FIRST MATE, BEN HARPER, WOULD NOT BE COMIN' BACK FROM THIS VOYAGE WITH ME..."

"I KNOW, CAPN! YOU OUGHT TO HAVE SOMEBODY LIKE EILEEN TO COME HOME TO!"

"MAYBE SO, BENMAYBE SO..."





WHAT IS THERE ABOUT A MAN THAT LETS HIM LOVE ONE WOMAN... LONG FOR HER THE WHOLE TIME HE'S AWAY... AND THEN, NO SOONER 'N HE HITS PORT, SET ABOUT HUNTIN' FOR ANOTHER TO BE WITH. BEN AND HE WERE NO DIFFERENT. FROM BOMBAY TO OSAKA, JAPAN...



AFTER A PLEASANT VISIT, I REMEMBERED OTHER BUSINESS THAT NEEDED TENDIN' TO DO, SHOES IN HAND. I PEEDED OVER TO A PAPER WALL AND CALLED OUT...



THEN I VISITED A CRYING TOOTHY GENT WHO COULD FURNISH A LOT OF INFORMATION ABOUT A LOT OF THINGS. MOST OF THEM UNWHOLESOME. HE MARKED A CRUDE BLACK CIRCLE AROUND A TINY DOT ON A GREASY OLD MAP FOR WHICH I GAVE HIM ONE CRISP U.S. DUCK.



I LEFT THE SHODDY LITTLE SHOP AND MADE MY WAY BACK THROUGH CRICKED JAMMED STREETS TOWARD THE SHIP, MY HEAD SPINNING WITH THOUGHTS OF EILEEN AND BEN AND HOW HE WASN'T GOIN' TO SEE HER AGAIN... NOT IF I GOT MY DUCK'S WORTH OF INFORMATION OUT OF THAT HISSIN' GRININ' OLD GENT...



WE WERE UNDER WAY AGAIN BEFORE MIDNIGHT. BEN WAS LYIN' ON HIS BUNK, WEARY, BUT NOT TOO TIRED TO TALK ABOUT HIS FAVORITE TOPIC... EILEEN. I SAT AT MY DESK, STUDYING THE GREASY OLD MAP.



NOT STRAIGHT HOME, BEN. I'VE GOT ONE SHIRT STOP TO MAKE!

WHERE'RE YOU TALKIN' ABOUT, MATT? OSAKA WAS OUR LAST PORT OF CALL.

THIS IS A PRIVATE DEAL, BEN, A FRIEND OF MINE IN BOMBAY ASKED ME TO DROP A BARREL OF FUEL OIL AT THIS LITTLE ISLAND. I PROMISED I WOULD.



WE REACHED THE TINY SPECK OF FORSAKEN CORAL AND LAID THE THIRD NIGHT OUT. EXCEPT FOR A GLIMMER OF LIGHT HERE AND THERE IN THE BLACKNESS, THERE WAS NO SIGN OF LIFE ON THE ISLAND. WHILE THE BARREL OF FUEL OIL WAS BEING LOADED INTO THE DUMKEY I ELECTED BEN TO TAKE IT ABOARD...

IS THERE TIME FOR ME TO GO SOME HUNTIN', SKIPPIT? HEY, BEN. DEAR MATEY, I'LL WAIT FOR YOU...



'BEN' REACHED EXACTLY AS I'D EXPECTED HIM TO REACT. I WATCHED HIM ROWACROSS THE LAGOON TO A SMALL DOCK AND TIE-UP. A MINUTE LATER HE DISAPPEARED INTO THE DARK, RAT-INFESTED TOWN OF THE ORIENT'S ISLAND DUMPS BECAUSE FOR ITS CONDEMNED... CONDEMNED TO DEATH, THAT IS, BY BUBBING PLAGUE! THE BLACK DEATH! NOT THIS DEATH...



'BEN' CAME DOWN FAST. HE STARTED SWELLIN' AROUND HIS ARMPITS AND OTHER PLACES. SOON, A FESTERING, GREENISH-YELLOW SORE COVERED HIM AND A STINKING, NAUSEATING SUBSTANCE OZED FROM HIS FLESH. I KEPT CLEAR OF HIS QUARTERS FROM THEN ON AND ORDERED THE CREW TO DO THE SAME...

I KNOW THE SYMPTOMS... THE SORE'S BORN POISONIN' OF THE BLOOD, AND THAT COUGH. THAT'S WHEN IT'S DANGEROUS THE PLAGUE IS IN HER LONES NOW. A MAN CAN CATCH IT EVEN TALKIN' T' HIM.

BUBBING PLAGUE... GAST... THE BLACK DEATH!



'IT WAS ALMOST DARK WHEN MY FIRST MATE RETURNED TO THE SHIP, EXHAUSTED BUT PLEASED WITH HIMSELF. HE'D HUNTED DOWN AND GOTTEN' WHAT HE WANTED. HE'D GOTTEN MORE THAN HE WANTED! IT TOOK TWO DAYS, THEN BROKE OUT...

...CAN'T PICK MYSELF UP OUT OF M' BUNK, MATE. HOT... FEVER... CHILLS. I'M SICK...

YOU'LL HAVE TO DOCTOR YOURSELF, BEN. WE'RE A THOUSAND MILES FROM THE NEAREST PORT...



'AT THE MENTION OF THE DREAD, HIGHLY CONTAGIOUS DISEASE, THE CREW FLEED AND SHUDDERED AS ONE MAN, IT WAS PART OF MY PLAN LETTIN' THEM WORRY... REMINDIN' THEM. BUT ONE DAY, THEY FOUND SOMETHIN' ELSE TO OCCUPY THEIR MINDS. I FOUND 'EM TOSSIN' GARBAGE OVERBOARD...

WHAT'RE YOU MEN DOIN'?

FEEDIN' THE WHALE, CAP'N STANKE. HE'S BEEN FOLLOWIN' US ALL MORNIN'! SEET?



'I'VE SEEN WHALES BEFORE BUT NEVER SO CLOSE AS THAT GREAT BALL BREAK. HE LEPT UP WITH THE SHIP... OPENIN' HIS TANKIN' CAVE OF A MOUTH TO LET THE GARBAGE IN...



'WHAT KEPT BEN HARPER ALIVE, I'LL NEVER KNOW. MAYBE HE WAS RAGIN' AGAINST DEATH JUST TO SEE EILEEN ONCE MORE. ANYHOW, THE NEXT FEW DAYS WERE TERRIBLE ONES AND I TRIED TO RELAX BY TOSSIN' CHUNKS OF MOLDY BEEF AND OTHER REFUSE TO THE WHALE TAILIN' US...



'THE WHALE STAYED WITH US. SOMETIMES HE'D ROLL AND DIVE AND HE WOULDN'T SEE HIM FOR HOURS, THEN SOMEBODY'D YELL "THAR 'E BLOWS" AND HE'D BE BACK GRASIN' ANOTHER GARBAGE FEAST...



"AT NIGHT I'D GO OUT ON DECK, BREATHIN' IN THE SALTY WARM PACIFIC AIR, AND I'D THINK ABOUT ME AND ELSBEN. I WAS THINKIN' OF HER THE RIGHT ONE OF THE MEN SAME A-BURNIN' AND SCREAMIN'..."

"...HIS FACE IS ALL  
ROTTEN BLACK,  
CAPTAIN... AND HIS  
FLESH IS MORN'  
LIKE IT'S--CHOKED--  
CRAWLIN' WITH  
MAGGOTS!"

"SEN, OUT  
OF HIS  
ROOM! GOOD  
LONER! NOW  
COULD THE  
MAN WALK?"

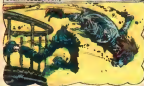
"AND THEN, I SAW HIM! BEN WAS A WALKIN' DEATH. HIS BODY A MASS OF BLACK ROT. SMALL, SPONY-DANG DRIPPIN' AWAY WITH EACH STUFF STAMPERIN' STEP HE TOOK. HIS CLOTHES WERE A TATTERED STINKY MESS OF GREENISH DRIED OOZE AND CONGEALED BLACK BLOOD. MY OWN-ER CAME UP SOLD IN MY THROAT."

CHOKED

"I HOLLERED FOR SPOTLIGHTS AS HE STUMBLERED ACROSS THE DECK. MEN CAME RUSHIN' WITH GAFFS, THEIR FACES TWISTED IN DISGUST. BEN KEPT SHUFFLIN' DOWN TOWARDS ME."

"GET HIM OVER THE SIDE, YA BILGE LIKE! DUMP HIM BEFORE HE HAS US ALL WASTIN' AWAY WITH THE BLACK ROT!"

"THEY TRIED HOORIN' THEIR GAFFS INTO BEN, BUT THE TIPS CAME AWAY WITH HORRIBLE SOBS OF FOUL-SMELLING ROTTEN FLESH. THEY TRIED SHOVIN' WITH THE POLES. BEN SOT OUT IN TWO BY THE ANK, WITH NO MORE SOUND THAN IF HE'D BEEN A JELLYFISH, AS HE WENT OVERBOARD."



"BY MORNIN', I FELT BETTER ABOUT THE WHOLE THING. WE'D LEFT WHAT WAS LEFT OF BEN HUNDREDS OF MILES BEHIND US AND I'D COMMITTED A MURDER NOBODY'D BE ABLE TO PIN ON ME. I HAD MY MIND ON LOVELY ELSBEN WHEN TOM BALLARD, MY SECOND MATE, CALLED ME TO THE RAIL."

"OUR WHALE'S STILL  
WITH US, CAPTAIN"

"THAT'S RIGHT! BUT HE'S  
ACTIN' QUEER... ISN'T HE?"



"AN' THAT'S WHEN IT HAPPERED! THE HUGE BALL SPERM SHATTERED CONCLUSIVELY. A TREMENDOUS YELLOW AND GREY BUBBLING MASS OF WAX-LIKE STUFF SPURTED OUT OF HIS CAUTEROUS NOOTH. BUBBLIN' UNOULATING ON THE OIL-PA SURFACE."

"LET'S GET OUT OF HERE,  
CAPTAIN! THAT STENCH IS  
CHOKIN' ME!"

"NOIN, BY HEAVENS!  
THAT'S WHALE SPERM,  
AMBERGRIS!"



"AMBERGRIS? FLOATIN' GOLD! THE SPERM OF A SPERM WHALE, NEEDED FOR THE BEST PERFORMED THAT FOUL-SMELLIN', FATTY NEED WAS WORTH A FORTUNE."

"REVERSE ENGINES! PREPARE TO LOWER ANNY ALL BOATS! A HUNDRED DOLLAR BONUS TO EACH MAN WHO HELPS."



"I EMPTIED A HUNDRED BARRELS OF MY FUEL OIL CARGO TO HOLD MY AMBERGRIS. A WEEK LATER WE DOCKED IN SAN DIEGO, WHERE I CALLED BLAZES FROM A PORT HEALTH OFFICIAL...BUT NOT UNTIL AFTER I'D DISPOSED OF THE AMBERGRIS."

COMING INTO PORT AFTER A PLAGUE DEATH ON YOUR SHIP MAY COST YOU YOUR PAPERS, CAPTAIN STARK!

THE DEVIL WITH MY PAPERS. I'M A RICH MAN AND I'M GOING TO MARRY THE MOST BEAUTIFUL GIRL IN THE WORLD!

"THE PERFUME MAKER NOT ONLY PAID ME SIXTY-TWO THOUSAND DUCKS FOR MY AMBERGRIS, BUT ALSO SENT ME A FLAGON OF THE SCENT MADE FROM IT. WHEN I FINALLY GOT OUT OF QUARANTINE, I BROUGHT IT TO EILEEN."

I DON'T WANT TO HEAR HOW BEN DIED, MATT! ALL I KNOW IS YOU ARE HERE... THAT'S ALL THAT MATTERS!

HERE, BABY! HERE'S ENOUGH PERFUME TO BATHIE IN! AND IT'S ONLY THE BEGINNING!

SO THAT'S IT? NOW, EILEEN IS IN HER ROOM THERE, GETTIN' INTO 'SOMETHING COMFORTABLE'. AS SHE PUT IT, WHICH IS PROBABLY A SHEER BLACK MISLEISE, AND I'M THINKING ABOUT WHY SOME STUPID WHALE THREW UP WHEN IT DIED...



I OUGHT TO BE GLAD IT HAPPENED! IF IT HADN'T, TO BE SIXTY-TWO THOUSAND DOLLARS POORER, AND... AND... OH, LORD!



BEN! THAT BLASTED WHALE MUST HAVE SWALLOWED THE BLACK-ROTTED DISEASED REMAINS OF BEN HARPER! THAT'S WHY HE THREW UP!



EILEEN! EILEEN, OPEN UP! QUICK! DON'T USE THAT PERFUME, EILEEN! DON'T USE IT!



EILEEN HARPER COMES OUT OF HER ROOM NOW, GRINNING ECSTATICALLY... THE BLACK SPONGY, ROTTING FLESH DROPPING FROM HER FACE. THE WHITE BONE GLEAMING THROUGH HERE AND THERE, CAPTAIN STARK SCREAMS IN HORROR AT THE SIGHT AND STENCH OF HER...



WHY NOT, MATT? IT'S SUCH A LOVELY-SMELLING PERFUME, DARLING.

YAAAAHHHHH!

- THE END -

HEH, HEH! AND THAT'S THE LEAD-OFF PARR, YELP-HOURS. DID YOU NOTICE THAT EILEEN REALLY DIDN'T LIKE THE PERFUME, MATT SAYS HE'D DIDN'T YOU SEE THE WAY HER FACE DROPPED? WELL, I GOT A DATE WITH MY EDITORS TO PLAY A GAME OF HEARTS. WE USE REAL DRES I'LL BE BACK LATER WITH ANOTHER TERROR TOME. NOW I'LL TURN YOU OVER TO THE MULL-KEEPER, BY THE WAY, THE WHALE IN THIS TOME WAS SORRY HE BROUGHT THE WHOLE THING UP!



'BYE NOW'

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

WEE, HEE! SCARED, HNT? GOOD! OLD HAL DEMER-HICK, O.K., HAS SOFTENED YOU UP FOR THE CHILL! NOW YOUR VAULT-KEEPER IS READY TO PUT YOU ON ICE WITH A GRIPPINGLY GRAPHIC ACCOUNT OF A BREEDY BOON WHO GURMBED HIS WAY INTO A DIVE! HE WAS A REAL BONE GUY WHEN HE WAS THROUGHT TO COME INTO THE VAULT OF HORROR, AND LISTEN TO THIS EERIE EPISODE I CALL...

## BURIAL at SEA

YOU'RE NAME IS BARNET HOAG. YOU'VE ALWAYS CRAVED SOLITUDE AND NOW YOU'VE FOUND IT ON THIS BLEAK LONELY, WINDSWOFT, SUN-TORTURED FLORIDA KEY. . . THIS GRIM ACRE OF UNREFLED PARADISE. YOU GUIDE YOUR OLD CAR INTO A SANDY, BRISTLING PALMETTO PATCH, AND YOU UNLOAD YOUR GEAR. . .



SWEAT-ING IN A SEA OF SWEAT, BASKING UNDER THE LOAD OF FISHING TACKLE, BAIT BOX, FOOD HAMPER AND GALLON JAR OF WATER, YOU'VE FOUND TEMPORARY RELIEF IN THE SHADE OF SAUNT LONG-NECKED PINES AS YOU TRUDGE TOWARD THE GLARING WHITE BEACH.



YOU PASS A LINE OF SILENT PALMS LEFT LEANING LANDWARD BY SOME LONG AND VIOLENT WIND THAT HAD ONCE ROARED BY. AND, UNLOADING YOUR EQUIPMENT ONTO THE BURNING SAND, YOU STUDY THE GURDAILY-SHAPED BROTESQUE MANGROVE TREES, THEIR EXPOSED BRACKLEKE ROOTS INTERTWINING, SPRAWLING FROM THE BRINE AT THE SHORE.



YOU TURN AT THE SOUND AND SEE NO FISH, BUT AN ALMOST-NAKED, BEARDED, GORRY-BROWN OLD MAN WITH GREY HAIR DOWN TO HIS SHOULDERS EMERGE FROM THE DEPTHS AND MAKE HIS WAY TOWARD THE BEACH.



THEN, BARNET HOWL, YOU SWEAR UNDER YOUR BREATH... BECAUSE YOU ARE NO LONGER ALONE. YOUR SOLITUDE IS GONE. YOU BEGIN TO FEEL H... TO LEAVE IN DISBURT... WHEN YOU FEEL THE SUDDEN, STRONG TUGGING ON YOUR LINE...



THE FISH BREAKS WATER, STRUGGLING TO SPIT OUT THE HOOK AND YOU SEE THAT IT IS A BARRACUDA. FINALLY, YOU BRING THE VICIOUS SCOUNDREL OF THE SEA TO LAND. YOU STARE DOWN AT YOUR GASPING CATCH, SHIVER AT THE SIGHT OF ITS BARED RIPPER TEETH...



BEYOND, THE TURQUOISE ATLANTIC RESTS TRANQUILLY BETWEEN TIDES. BOON, HOOK BARRED, FEET BAKED, YOU TREAD FAR OUT OVER THE SAND AND CORAL BOTTOM BEFORE REACHING KNEE-DEEP WATER. YOU BEGIN TO SURF-CAST AND ALL IS PEACE AND QUIET EXCEPT FOR THE SOUND OF A FISH NEARBY, LEAPING FROM THE SEA...



YOU STAND, STARING, AS HE MOVES SOUNDLESSLY ACROSS THE SAND TO THE BROKEN HULK OF AN ANCIENT VESSEL THAT HAD BEEN TOSSED, HALF-HIDDEN, AMONG THE PALMS. AS YOU WONDER WHY YOU HADN'T NOTICED THE GRIZZLED WHIRL BEFORE, THE OLD MAN WAIVERS INTO IT THROUGH A CRUDE DOORWAY CUT INTO ITS ROTTING SIDE...



YOU PAKE AND LEAVE YOUR SHIRT-RED PARADISE, GRATIFIED, AT LEAST, THAT THE OLD MAN HADN'T SEEN YOU AND SUSPECTED YOU TO ENJOICE, BORING TALK. SUDDENLY, A LONG BLACK SHADOW FALLS ACROSS YOUR PATH. A THIN, PIPING VOICE BRINGS YOU UP SHORT...



YOU TURN NOW, BARRY, FACING THE SPIZZLED OLD MAN. NUDE, EXCEPT FOR A TATTERED FILTHY PAIR OF DUCK PANTS THAT REEK OF DEAD FISH. HE PORTS A RUSTY, ASSED MUSKET AT YOUR CHEST...



YOU HEARD ME, MISTUH? I COME JUST TO THIS PROPERTY, SO IT'S *MAINE!* NOW *BYE!* FORE I BLAST YU CLEAN T' KINGDOM COME!

YOUR FRIGHT OF THIS SPIZZLED OLD MAN WITH THE ANCIENT WEAPON OWES WAY TO ANGER AT HAVING BEEN CHEATED OF YOUR LOANED—FOR SOLITUDE...



I WAS GOING, YOU DIRTY OLD COOT... BUT NOW I GOT A MIND TO STAY!

BEY STAYIN', MISTUH, AH' I'LL BE GUTTIN' YU UP FER SHARK BAIT!

THERE'S A COLD GLINT IN HIS ICE-BLUE EYES, AND HIS SUN-BRONZED CROSS-HATCHED BEIN GRABS TAIT ACROSS HIS JAWS. YOU RELENT IN THE FACE OF THE WEAPON IN THE OLD MAN'S TIGHTENED GRIP AND YOU MOVE OFF ANGRILY THROUGH THE PINES...



BOILING WITH RESENTMENT, YOU STOW YOUR GEAR INTO YOUR CAR, THEN YOU SAID BACK TOWARDS THE BEACH, UNWILLING TO BOW TO THE OLD ONE'S ILL WILL...



HE *BE OFFED* ME WHAT, BUT I'M *NOT LEAVING!*

I'LL SHOW THAT OLD GRAB. I'LL BURN 'EM OUT. I'LL SET FIRE TO THAT FILTHY WRECK HE LIVES IN AND I'LL BURN HIM OUT FOR GOOD!



SLOWLY, SILENTLY, STEALTHILY YOU MAKE YOUR WAY BACK TO THE BARNACLE AND SALT-ENCRUSTED WOODEN CARCASS OF HALFA ONCE-PROUD VESSEL. YOU'RE FILLED WITH VENGEFULNESS AND CURIOSITY. YOU STOP OUTSIDE THE ROTTED DOOR. A METALLIC SLEAM CATCHES YOUR EYE...



WHAT... WHAT'S THAT? ON THE SAND! LOOK! LIKE A... A...

YOU PICK UP THE GLITTERING OBJECT. YOU STUDY IT, TURNING IT OVER IN YOUR HAND...



IT *BE!* IT'S A GOLD COIN! REAL GOLD!

YOUR FIRST REACTION IS TO GET AWAY WITH YOUR PRIZE. YOU HURRY, STUMBLING, TO YOUR CAR...THE ANCIENT GOLD COACH-ON SLUTTERED TIGHTLY IN YOUR SWEATY PALM. YOU DRIVE HASTILY OFF THE LONELY HEL SPEEDING NORTHWARD ACROSS THE OVERSEAS HIGHWAY BRIDGES...



MAYBE THIS COIN'S BEEN THERE ALL THE TIME AND THE OLD GOOT NEVER...NOTICED...IT...

YOU EASE UPON THE GAS, YOU STOP RUNNING. YOU THINK SOME MORE AS YOU DRIVE SLOWLY NORTHWARD. SOON, YOU REACH ANOTHER KEY, ROLL UP TO AN EATERY THERE, AND WALK TOWARDS IT...



WHAT IF THE LUNATIC IS SITTING ON A FORTUNE IN GOLD? WHAT GOOD WOULD IT DO HIM? HE'S TOO OLD TO ENJOY IT!

SO, BARNEY HORN, GREED AND DETERMINATION ETCH THEMSELVES INTO YOUR FACE AS YOU MAKE YOUR DECISION...



I'M GOING BACK THERE...TOMORROW! AND IF HE'S GOT MORE GOLD, I'M GOING TO GET IT!

WHAT'LL IT BE, MISTERY?

ISN'T THAT RIDICULOUS, BARNEY? THINK AGAIN. THAT'S IT! NOW YOU'VE GOT IT...



...OR MAYBE...MAYBE HE'S GOT MORE HIDDEN IN THAT WOOD? A FORTUNE IN GOLD...MAYBE...

YOU SIT AT A FLY-FLECKED COUNTER, STARING AT THE MENU, HARDLY SEEING IT.



AND WHO'D BELIEVE HIM IF HE BABBLES TO THE LAM ABOUT HIS GOLD BEING MISSING? FOR THAT MATTER, WHO'D MISS THE OLD MAN?

YES, SIR?

YOU ARRIVE BACK AT "THE OLD MAN'S KEY" ALONG WITH THE NIGHT. PASS AS YOU DID THAT MORNING AMONG THE PALMETTOS, AND, TAKING A JACKKNIFE, YOU SUIT YOUR CAR.



QUIET WHISPERING IN THE PINES ACCOMPANY YOUR SLOW APPROACH TO THE BEACH. THE ELEGANT CHIRP OF COCASUS SURROUND YOU, WITHIN, YOU FEEL THE RAPID THUMPING OF YOUR HEART. A RISING GIBBONS MOON LIGHTS YOUR WAY TO THE BAD BULK AMONG THE PALMS OR THE BEACH.





NOW YOU ARE THERE, BARNEY. YOUR HEAVY BREATHING BLENDS WITH THE BREEZE BLOWN PALMPHONDS THAT SOUND SO MUCH LIKE A SUMMER SHOWER, AND WITH THE GENTLE LAPPING OF THE SURF UPON THE NEARBY SHORE. A SOFT ORANGE LIGHT GLEAMS THROUGH A CRACK IN THE DOOR. YOU PEER IN...

YOU SEE HIM IN THE FLICKERING CANOLE SLOW, HIS HAD EYES GLEANING AS HE LETS A TRICKLE OF GOLD COINS FALL THROUGH HIS GRABLED FINGERS INTO A WOODEN BOX ON THE ROUGH TABLE AT WHICH HE SITS. THE FAINT CHIME OF CLINKING METAL INVITES YOU IN...

THE ELEMENT OF SURPRISE, BARNEY SLAM OPEN THE DOOR! THAT'S IT! SCARED ALMOST OUT OF HIS WITS, THE OLD MAN DROPS HIS TREASURE INTO A DIRTY WRINKLED CLOTH AND BALLS IT UP IN HIS TREMBLING HANDS.



YOU STEP TOWARD HIM. THE OLD MAN DROPS HIS RAG-WRAPPED TREASURE OF COOGLDONS TO THE FLOOR. THEN, BENDING AS THOUGH TO RETRIEVE THEM, HE COMES UP AGAIN. THE RUSTED OLD MUSKET IN HIS BONY PAWS... POINTS AT YOUR HEAD.

THE OLD MAN CHORTLES, PULLS BACK HIS FOREFINGER, SQUEEZING THE MUSKET'S TRIGGER, BUT NOTHING HAPPENS. NO BLAST. NO SHOT. NOTHING. THE BOLT, FROZEN BY YEARS OF RUST, DOESN'T MOVE. A COLD TWISTED GRIN WREATHS YOUR BREATH—STAINED FACE AS HE SAVES ON.



YOU LEAP AT HIM, BRINGING THE IRON JACKHAMMER DOWN ON HIS SKULL, FEELING THE CRUSHING OF BONE.

YOU PICK UP THE BUNDLE AND EMPTY THE COINS INTO THE MISER'S BOX... THROWING THE RAG AWAY.



AGAIN AND AGAIN YOU STRIKE, UNTIL HE SINKS LIFELESS TO THE FLOOR. THEN, ONE MORE TERRIBLE BLOW AS HE LIES THERE, JUST TO MAKE SURE, AND HIS BRAINS SCATTER ABOUT THE WORK-WEARIED BOARD.

YOU SCRAMBLE ABOUT THE BRINE-FOULED WRECK. ANGRY. ANGRILY SEARCHING...

THERE *MUST* BE MORE!  
THERE'S *GOT* TO BE MORE!



BUT YOU'VE GOT IT ALL, BARNEY, AND KNOWING THAT, YOU SAS TO THE FLOOR, SICK AND TIRED WITH DISAPPOINTMENT. BUT THE OLD MAN'S PIECE OF DIRTY CLOTH CATCHES YOUR EYE...



DOTTED LINE... MARKED "100 YARDS"... TO A BIG "X"... FROM A LINE MARKED "LOW TIDE"... AND AN ARROW MARKED "H"? BY GOD! IT'S A MAP!

WELL, I'LL BE... IT'S A TREASURE MAP THE OLD MAN MADE. IT *MUST* BE WHERE THE OTHER HALF OF THE SHIP IS. THAT'S WHAT IT MUST BE! YEAN? SURE? A PIRATE SHIP, BROKEN IN TWO BY A HURRICANE? HALF SUNK? HALF WASHED ASHORE... THIS HALF!



THAT'S WHAT HE WAS DOIN' WHEN HE WAS COMIN' OUT OF THE WATER. HE WAS BRINGING BACK THESE *GOINGS* FROM THE SUNK HALF OF THE WRECK! IT'S *OUT THERE*!



SLOWER, BARNEY. SLOWER NOW. THINK IT OUT. YOU'RE ON TO SOMETHING. JUST THINK IT OUT *CAREFULLY*. SLOW OUT THE OLD MAN'S LANTERN. THAT'S IT! NOW GO OUTSIDE. LOOK OUT THERE... AT THE SEA...

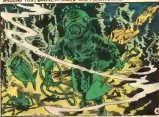
I'M NOT MUCH OF AN UNDERWATER SWIMMER! BUT I MAY BE ABLE TO RENT A DIVING SUIT SOMEWHERE! YEAN? I'LL DRIVE TO KEY WEST...



SO YOU DRIVE ALL NIGHT, BARNEY, AND YOU'RE IN KEY WEST WHEN DAWN LIGHTS THE SKY. BY LATE AFTERNOON, YOU'RE BACK AT THE "OLD MAN'S KEY" WITH A DIVING SUIT, ENOUGH ROPE TO GO OUT 50 YARDS, A GASOLINE-DRIVEN COMPRESSOR, THE WORKS. BREATHING WITH EXCITEMENT, YOU TAKE A SPACE AND START FACING OUT INTO THE SURF...



DEEPER AND DEEPER YOU GO... OUT UNDER THE ROLLING BREAKERS. OUT INTO THE SEA. AND THE SEA IS ALIVE AROUND YOU, BARNEY... ALIVE AND FRIGHTENING...



YOU GO OUT PAST THE MAP'S 50 YARDS AND THE SEA AROUND YOU IS FULL OF WONDERFUL BARNY, BUT NO BROKEN PIRATE HULL, NO SUBMERGED HALF-HULK DO YOU SEE...

I MUST'VE BEEN *CRAZY* TO TAKE THAT OLD COOT'S MAP SERIOUSLY'!



AND THEN YOU SEE IT, RISING LIKE A SHADOW AHEAD OF YOU. THE MARKER.

THAT'S IT? THAT'S IT? THERE AIN'T NO COAT, HE'S HAD THE TREASURE, HE WAS BRINGIN' IT OUT! HE WAS BRINGIN' IT IN HERE. BURYIN' IT!



THERE, SIX FATHOMS DOWN, BEFORE THE ALGAE AND MOSS-ENCRUSTED MARKER, YOU BEGIN TO DIG. YOU DIG DOWN AND YOU DIG OUT... AN OLD, EMPTY HOLE WITH MOORS, NO CHEST, NOTHING. YOU CLIMB OUT, BITE WITH FRUSTRATION...

MAYBE THE MARKER SHOWS WHICH SIDE TO DIG ON. I'LL JUST SCRAPE OFF THE SLIME...



WITH YOUR SPADE, YOU SCRAPE OFF THE GREEN ALGAE AND MOSS AND SLIME. AND YOU TURN COLD, STABBING BACK IN A FRENZY AT WHAT YOU SEE...



NO! NO! GOOD LORD!

...PINNING YOU DOWN INTO THE HOLE YOU'VE DUG... PINNING YOU DOWN INTO YOUR GRAVE. FOR YOU KNOW THAT BEFORE LONG, THE GAS IN THE COM-PRESSOR OUT ON THE SHORE WILL RUN OUT AND THE AIR WILL BE GONE AND YOU'LL SUFFOCATE. THE OLD MAN, THE *CRAZY* OLD MAN! HE WAS *RIGHT*! HE *DID* KNOW! HE *HAS* PREPARED! THE LETTERS CUT INTO THE MARKER LAUGH AT YOU.



YOUR AIRLINE FOULS AROUND THE MARKER, STOPPING YOU FROM RUNNING. TERRORIZED, YOU TAKE AT THE RUBBER TUBE. THE MARKER TILTS FORWARD, SLOWLY... FALLING... AS IF IN SLOW MOTION.



HEH, HEH LIKE THEY SAY, KIDNIES? BARNY *DUG* HIS HOLE... NOW HE'S DYING IN IT. HE THIRSTED AFTER GOLD AND SETTLED FOR A BELLYFUL OF SALT WATER. WELL, THAT'S MY TREASURE-TERROR-TALE FOR THIS ISSUE OF *DR. X*'S MORBID MAG.

NOW I'LL TURN YOU BACK TO HIM FOR A TALK ABOUT A *BLONDE* FLIRT WHO FINALLY MADE SOME *DESSERT*. *QUICKEN!* *WOO!* I'LL SEE YOU NEXT IN MY MAG, THE *HAULT OF HORROR*! 'BYE, NOW!





# GUNMAN



With the cardboard carton propped against the wall, Ed Grant pressed the door buzzer: chimes rang inside the apartment and footsteps scurried toward him. The safety latch scraped open, the door swung wide and Ed Grant stepped into the apartment, pushing the carton in front of him. "What . . . what's *ablu*?" the woman asked in surprise, pointing to the carton.

"Delivery," Ed Grant answer, locking the door shut with his heel. He slipped the latch into place and dumped the carton on the floor. "B-But I didn't order any . . ." the woman protested. Then she saw the gun Ed Grant held. "You . . . a . . ."

"A guy working his way through college," Ed Grant said flatly. "Don't make me thank you on this one, lady. . . I want all the-cash and jewelry you got here!"

Grant heard a high-pitched voice coming along the corridor from one of the bedrooms, and he turned warily. A cow-headed five-year-old careened into the room, deeply involved in banking an imaginary aircraft he was piloting. He stopped in his tracks, his mouth gaping. "Hey!" he whinnied. "Who's this, mom?"

"L-Look, mister," the woman pleaded. "We don't have much money, see? My husband's only a lab assistant at the chemical plant on River Street. He just got outa school himself, and . . ."

"Can it!" Ed Grant snapped. "C'mon . . . the CASH! Where's it at?"

The kid, who had sauntered over to the foyer table, suddenly pulled a cap pistol from a toy holster slung over the chair and whirled toward Ed Grant. His finger squeezed the trigger and his high-pitched voice exploded in a series of raucous gumbor sounds. Ed Grant started at the sound, then began to laugh deep in his throat. "The kid's a lil' whacky, ain't

he?" he snickered. Then, nudging her toward the kitchen with his gun, he added, "Let's find *char dough*, *sister*!"

While the woman nervously pulled a purse from a kitchen drawer, the kid grabbed a tiny telephone buried in a toy box and yelped into the receiver. "Sheriff! Ambie over here pronounced Varmint's robbin' my mom!"

Ed Grant tilted his head far back, opened his mouth and roared with delight till tears came to his eyes. For several minutes he shook with uncontrolled mirth. Subsidizing slowly, he wiped his eyes with the back of his hand. "The lil' nut," he chorled. "A real character, ain't he? Right outa television?"

The kid's face clouded and he ran from the room. A moment later, as Ed Grant peered into the purse he had grabbed, the boy returned. He held a small water pistol. Ed turned, started to guffaw again. "Jerko, here," he exploded. "A reg'lar half-pint hero, ain't he?"

The boy's face tightened . . . he squeezed the trigger and a stream of smoky fluid sprayed into Ed Grant's face. He dropped his gun and a shriek of horror poured from Ed Grant's scored lips. He staggered backwards, his eye-sockets raw cavities where the eyeballs had just been burnt out of his head. One trembling hand went to his face . . . passed over the ruined flesh, which, was curling away with a bubbling sound, revealing stark yellowish bones beneath. Ed Grant screeched in agony, his face already a ghastly oozing wound. He sagged to the floor.

The boy felt his mother's arm tagging him sharply, as she yanked the water pistol from him. "Just wait till I tell your daddy what you just did!" she snapped. "He told you a hundred times never to fill your gun with his *sulfuric acid*!"

**NOW...IF YOU JOIN...YOU GET THE BULLETIN...FREE!**



**YES, FANS...YOU, TOO, CAN BE LUCKY LIKE MELVIN, HERE! YOU, TOO, CAN COMPLETE YOUR COLLECTION OF E.C.'S! YOU, TOO, CAN JOIN THE**

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THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB  
ROOM 106  
215 LAFAYETTE STREET  
NEW YORK, 12, N. Y.

So here's my \$02! So I could've joined for half the price a couple of months back! So now I get a bulletin subscription. So who says I want it. So I'm a sucker. So put me down and send me the stuff what the kids wearing and the bulletin I don't want but I'm paying for..

NAME \_\_\_\_\_  
ADDRESS \_\_\_\_\_  
CITY \_\_\_\_\_  
STATE \_\_\_\_\_

\* (\$02 BONUS CHECKS FOOT THE BAIL FOR THE BULLETIN, WFTF)  
(JUST WE HAD TO RAISE THE PRICE! SO BEHOLD)

\* (\$02 \$02 MEMBERSHIP WILL BE ACCEPTED AFTER JUNE 1, 1964)

# THE CRYPT-KEEPER'S CORNER

Heh, heh! Here comes our morbid mailman with the latest sack of corded stamped squares containing poetic correspondence from you creeps. So I'll just stick my honey paw into the "YEEHAWWWWW" Mmmmmmm! Very funny! Somebody sent a large coupon in a small envelope. A strange trick! Where was I? Oh, yes... so I'll just stick a pair of scissors into the old mail sack and print a few poems and stuff for your period.

Love Harvath of The Bronx, N. Y. joins the Poetical Parody to the tune of "I'm Looking Over A Four Leaf Clover":

I'm turning you over  
With a sharp lawn mower  
That I never used before.  
The first blade's for chopping.  
The second will hack,  
The third will dispatch  
Your head from your neck.  
No need explaining.  
The one remaining  
You won't hear anyone  
I'm turning you over  
With a sharp lawn mower  
That I never used before.

From the creative claw of John M. Gault who lives in a box in Waterville, Me comes this Steam Song Satire of the tune "Heart of my Heart":

Part of my heart,  
I love that engine.  
Part of my heart,  
Bring back a vein to me.  
When we were kids  
On the corner of the street  
We were rough and ready guys,  
But, oh, now we could handle barres  
Part of my heart.  
Mount friends were faster than  
Too bad we had to part  
I know a tear would glaze  
If once more I could hear  
To that gang that are part of my belt.

This next Lullabyer Lyric is the brainwork of Conrad J. Falk, of Chicago, Ill who pokes fun at the tune "Singing in the Rain" with these warped words.

I  
I'm swinging in the rain,  
Just swinging in the rain.  
What a ghastly old feeling.  
My neck's stretched again.  
My eyes bulge with pain,  
As I goggle this refrain.  
I'm swinging, swinging in the rain.

II

The soap has been sprung,  
My neck has been wrong,  
My tongue is just dangling,  
I know that I'm done.  
My face is all red,  
I know that I'm dead,  
I'm swinging, swinging in the rain.

Clara Bealla Crossland of McKeesport, Pa. who claims to be a poet in the strictly artistic sense of the word, submits this lovely little poemlet to pluck your heart strings:

My boyfriend is a charming thing  
I love him 'cause he is so sweet.  
One side of his ugly face is gone,  
The other hangs with rotting meat.

Raymond Newman of Chicago, Ill. writes these poetic verses:

Oh, for the life of a vampire,  
That's what I really crave  
To prove the face of death at night.  
And sleep each day in a grave.

John Newkirk of Maparth, N. Y. desires his love and this poem:

Blood and Guts  
All over the street,  
And me without  
A spoon to eat.

Paul Block and Douglas Tushman (they had to collaborate on this epic, yes) of Elmhurst, N. Y. knock a famous nursery rhyme out:

Hickory Dickory Dock  
The man went down the road.

Well, enough yet. Now for a limeric.

Dear Crypt-Keeper,

I was walking down the street reading my heart EC, when all of a sudden there was a scratch, a scream, and a man lay on the road. He had been hit by a car. The car sped away. I ran over to see what I could do. The man lay there and said, 'I'm dying! Help me!' So I helped him. My sentence is going to be carried out next Monday.

Bob Wilson  
Napara Falls, N. Y.

And now, on the spare left, the commercially. A job reception to this mag will set you back \$7.00 for eight weeks' monthly envelope... and all this for The ad. dress for ad. orders, poetry, comments, and criticism is:

The Crypt-Keeper  
Room 706, Dept. 44  
235 Lafayette Street  
N.Y.C. 12, N.Y.

HERE'S A TERROR-TALE OF A  
CHICK WHO FINALLY WORMED

# The PROPOSAL



PEARL HAD ALWAYS *LIVED* LIFE IN THE BEST OF STYLE... WITH FINE CLOTHES, JEWELRY, A PARK AVENUE APARTMENT, AND A CHAMPAGNE CADILLAC. AND PEARL HAD ALWAYS MARRIED TO FIND *RICH* HUSBANDS WHO WOULD BE WILLING TO *KEEP* HER IN THE STYLE TO WHICH SHE'D BECOME ACCUSTOMED... LIKE *FREDDY HOWELL*, FOR INSTANCE. FREDDY HOWELL WAS PEARL'S *LATEST* RICH-HUSBAND-BANKRUPT... HE *WAS*, THAT IS, UNTIL HE ANNOUNCED...



NOW, FREDDY WAS *GONE*. PEARL HAD LOST *ANOTHER* BILL-PAYING HUSBAND, AND THE *WIFE* WAS AT THE PENTHOUSE DOOR. PEARL WAS DESPERATE. A *ODD* DESPERATE PLANS WERE FORMULATED IN HER PRETTY RED HEAD AND DISCARDED BEFORE SHE REMEMBERED THE QUIET, GENTLE, LONELY MAN ACROSS THE HALL...



SHE WHAPPED HER FLIMSY BLACK NOCLISEE AROUND HER SHAPELY FIGURE AND STEPPED BOLDLY INTO THE HALL AS HOWARD ELLIS LOOKED HIS APARTMENT DOOR BEHIND HIM AND TURNED TO THE ELEVATOR...



PEARL LET HOWARD STARE. SHE LET HIS EYES TRAVEL OVER HER FULL YOUNG BODY JUST LONG ENOUGH. THEN, SHE PUT ON THE SHY EMBARRASSEDMENT AGL...

OH, I... I'M TERRIBLY SORRY, MR. ELLIS!... WHY WERE YOU HERE? I DON'T EVEN KNOW YOUR NAME! I'M PEARL DRAKE! MISS PEARL DRAKE!

ELLIS! HOWARD ELLIS! I... I... WELL, HERE'S THE ELEVATOR!

PEARL INMEDIATELY CURSED THE HIGH SPEED CONVEYANCE THAT HAD RUSHED UPWARD THROUGH THE STEEL THROAT OF THE BUILDING AND INTERRUPTED HER PROGRESS. SHE TURNED AND GLIDED BACK TO HER APARTMENT AS THE ELEVATOR DOORS CLOSED.

GOOD MORNING, MR. ELLIS... AND THANK YOU FOR THE TUNE!

NOT AT ALL, MISS DRAKE...

SHE CLOSED THE DOOR, LEANED BACK DISTRACTEDLY AGAINST IT, AND FROWNED...

I WONDER IF I OVERHEARD MY NAME WALKING OUT LIKE THIS? I WOULDN'T WANT HIM TO THINK I'M A CHEAP FEMALE WOLF ON THE PROWL. HE LOOKS SO PROPER AND PROUD. I WOULDN'T STAND A CHANCE IF HE THOUGHT THAT!

THEN PEARL SMILED. SHE WALKED SLOWLY ACROSS THE LIVING ROOM, HER VOLUPTUOUS FIGURE SWAYING SENSUOUSLY...

BUT HE IS A MAN! HE'S GOT ALL OF THE INSTINCTS OF A MAN. I'LL BET HE CAN'T GET ME OFF HIS MIND!



SHE STOPPED AT THE DESK, HER MIND RACING... SCHEMING. PLANNING HER NEXT MOVE. SHE FINGERED THE DISPOSABLE NOTICE SHE'D RECEIVED IN THE MORNING MAIL...

THEY'VE GIVEN ME A WEEK TO FORK OVER THREE HUNDRED DOLLARS HERE OR OUT ON THE STREET I GO. AND I HAVEN'T GOT IT. I HAVEN'T GOT HALF THAT MUCH!



PEARL Pondered her problem another moment and then, with her lovely face assuming a determined air, she hurried into the bedroom TO DRESS...

MR. HOWARD ELLIS IS MY ONLY GUY I'VE GOT TO GET HIM. ONE WITH ON THE OTHER!



THE ELEVATOR OPERATOR STARED HER UP AND DOWN AND SMILED LASCIVIOUSLY WHEN SHE ASKED HIM THE INFORMATION SHE NEEDED. IT WAS OBVIOUS HE'D HEARD OF HER PLAN...

I'D LIKE TO FIND OUT WHAT MR. ELLIS DOES FOR A LIVING? WHAT FORM HE WORKS FOR?

WHY DON'T YOU FIND OUT WHAT I CAN DO, INSTEAD, HONEY?





PEARL KNEW WHEN TO ACT HAUGHTY AND INDIGNANT. UNDER OTHER CIRCUMSTANCES, THE ELEVATOR OPERATOR MIGHT HAVE AROUSED HER INTERESTS, BUT NOW...

WHY, YOU *FRESH*...

SHE STOOD PROUD AND TRIUMPHANT AS HE RUBBED HIS BEET-RED CHEEK WHERE SHE'D SLAPPED IT. THEN, SHE SOLELY REPEATED...

I ASKED YOU IF YOU KNEW MR. ELLIS'S **STOCK BROKER BUSINESS?** NE... HE'S A **STOCK BROKER** I... THINK HE HAS HIS **OWN FIRM**

PEARL CROSSED THE LOBBY TO THE PHONE BOOTHS AND SCANNED THE CITY DIRECTORY...

ELLER... ELLER... ELLIS, MR. HERE IT IS! **HOWARD ELLIS AND ASSOCIATES, INC., STOCK BROKERS, INVESTMENT COUNSELORS, 231 WALL STREET...**

OUTSIDE THE LUXURIOUS APARTMENT, PEARL CONTEMPLATED HAILING A CAB, THEN CONSIDERED HER Waning FINANCES, AND WALKED UP THE SIDE STREET TO THE SUBWAY. SHE ROSE UNCOMFORTABLY IN THE CROWDED NOISY CARS, HER QUINCY NOSE TWITCHING SCORNFULLY AT THE SUFFOCATING SCENT OF THE NURANITY SURROUNDING HER. SHE TRIED TO LOSE HERSELF IN HER PLAN OF STRATEGY...

I'LL WAIT FOR HIM OUTSIDE THE BUILDING AT LUNCH HOUR. OF COURSE IT WILL BE AN ACCIDENTAL MEETING.

AT NOON, PEARL WAS AT THE ENTRANCE TO 231 WALL STREET, HER CAMPAIGN FOR THE CONQUEST OF THE UN-SUSPECTING MR. ELLIS CRYSTAL-CLEAR IN HER MIND...

I'LL CONVINCE HIM TO TAKE ME TO LUNCH AND HE'LL SEE I'N NO CHEAP DAME! HE'LL SEE I GOT HIGH-CLASS TASTE! HE'LL... OH-OH! HERE HE COMES... AND HERE I GO...

I SEE YOUR PARDON, MA'AM? I DIDN'T SEE... I'M SORRY! IT WAS ALL MY FAULT! I... WHY, IT'S MR. ELLIS!

MR. ELLIS! THIS IS A COINCIDENCE, RUNNING INTO YOU LIKE THIS. OH, BUT YOU DON'T REMEMBER ME IN MY CLOTHES, DO YOU? I REMEMBER THESE CLOTHES, REMEMBER THE MORNING? PEARL DRAKE? THE PENTHOUSE APARTMENT ACROSS THE HALL? OH, BUT YOU DON'T REMEMBER MISS DRAKE AND THE STOP-FRO WATCH!

BEFORE HOWARD COULD OBJECT, PEARL STEERED HIM TO A TAXI, TOOK HIS HAND, AND LED HIM INTO IT AFTER HER...

YOU DO REMEMBER WELL I OWE YOU SOMETHING FOR GOING SO KIND THIS MORNING, MR. ELLIS. I'M TAKING YOU TO LUNCH, THE PLAZA DRIVE!

THE PLAZA? BUT THAT'S WAY UPTOWN, MISS DART.



BY THE TIME THEY'D FLOWED UPTOWN THROUGH THE TRAFFIC AND ARRIVED AT THE BEAK PLAZA DINING ROOM, PEARL'S EFFULGENT DISPOSITION HAD WARNED THE VERY MILLIONAIRE...

RIGHT BOSS! HOWARD, AND THE ROAST PHEASANT UNDER GLASS SOUNDS DELICIOUS.

HAVE YOU GOT THAT, WAITER? I'LL HAVE A HAM SANDWICH ON WHOLE WHEAT TOAST AND A GLASS OF MILK.



THROUGH THE MEAL, PEARL CAREFULLY ENCOURAGED HOWARD. BY DESERT, HE WAS STRUGGLING TO SAY SOMETHING. BY FOLDS-CAFE, HE'D FINALLY SUMMONED UP THE COURAGE TO PUT HIS HAND ON HER'S AND BLURT...

PEARL...GULP...MAY I TAKE YOU TO DINNER AND A SHOW...TONIGHT?

OH, I'D LOVE THAT, HOWARD!



AND THAT NIGHT, AFTER THEIR DATE, THEY RETURNED TO THE PENTHOUSE FLOOR OF THE LUSH PARK AVENUE APARTMENT HOUSE. PEARL OPENED HER COOR AND SPOKE TEMPTIBLY IN A SOFT HONEYED TONE...

WOULDN'T YOU COME IN FOR A NIGHTS MEETING IN THE MORNING, DEAR?

THANK YOU, MS. PEARL. I HAVE A BOARD MEETING IN THE MORNING AND I MUST GET TO BED.



SO AFTER A BUCK\*GOODNIGHT! PEARL FOUND HERSELF ALONE IN HER APARTMENT, FRUSTRATED AND ANNOYED...

E. I MUST BE LOSING MY TOUCH!



BUT HOWARD ELLIS PHONED PEARL THE NEXT DAY FROM HIS OFFICE AND HER CONFIDENCE IN HER EVENTUAL SUCCESS WAS RESTORED...

WELL, PEARL? WHAT SHALL IT BE TONIGHT?

IT'S SUCH A LOVELY NIGHT, HOME, I'D RATHER NOT BE INDOORS. LET'S TAKE A HARBOR THROUGH THE PARK!



PEARL KNEW WHERE TO FIND ATMOSPHERE CONGENIAL TO ROMANCE. THE RIDE THROUGH THE PARK IN THE HARBOR CAB WAS JUST WHAT THE DOCTOR HAD ORDERED. SOON, HOWARD WAS HOLDING HER HAND AND WHISPERING SOFTLY...

IT IS A LOVELY NIGHT, PEARL...BUT NOT NEARLY AS LOVELY AS YOU ARE!

WHY, HOWARD...



PEARL WAS AN OLD HAND AT THIS GAME OF TRAPPING A MAN. SHE KNEW HOW TO PRESS HER ADVANTAGE... HOW TO MOVE HER SOFT FULL-LIPS CLOSE TO HIS INVITING...

OH, PEARL!



AND SHE KNEW HOW TO ACT SHY AND COY AND SURPRISED WHEN HE'D FINALLY FALLEN INTO HER LITTLE TRAP.

I-I'M SORRY, I-I-I DON'T  
PEARL! I BROUGHT MIND, HOWE!  
HAVE DONE THAT... I-I'M VERY  
FOND OF YOU!



SOON THEY WERE BACK OUTSIDE HER APARTMENT. PEARL LEANED AGAINST HER DOOR, FINGERING HOWARD'S COAT LAPEL AND GENTLY, GENTLY DRAGGING HIM AGAINST HER SUFIERERS BODY... WHISPERING...

KISS ME AGAIN, PEARL...  
HOWE...



SHE KISSED HIM WITH MOIST RAVISHING HUNGRY LIPS. SHE KISSED HIM AS SHE KNEW HE'D NEVER BEEN KISSED BEFORE. AND THEN SHE LEFT HIM STANDING THERE... LIMP... TREMBLING... GASPING FOR BREATH. SHE LOCKED THE DOOR BETWEEN THEM AND STOOD IN THE DARKNESS OF HER APARTMENT, GRINNING WITH SATISFACTION...

ONCE MORE LIKE THAT AND HE'LL BE BEDDING AND IT'S BETTER BE SOON! I'VE ONLY GOT A FEW DAYS LEFT BEFORE I GET KICKED OUT!



SHE WATCHED THIS WEALTHY MILVETUAST PULL HIMSELF TOGETHER MANFULLY. SHE LISTENED, SHOCKED, TO THE WORDS HE CAREFULLY ENOUNCED IN A FIRM, ALMOST FORMAL MANNER...

PEARL, I WANT YOU FOR MY WIFE!

WHAT?!



IT WAS WARM THE NEXT EVENING, THERE WAS NO MOON AND THE SNOW HUNG DAM OVERHEAD. PEARL, COULD GRASP THE DEEP TENSION IN HOWARD AS THEY WALKED HOME. SHE WAITED PATIENTLY. FINALLY, HE STOPPED BENEATH A LAMP POST AND HE GAVE A NEW EASER DETERMINED LOOK IN HIS EYES...

PEARL! I-I-I NEED YOU! I WANT YOU!

OH, HOWARD! IF YOU ONLY KNEW HOW MUCH I NEED YOU!



THIS WAS BEYOND PEARL'S WILDEST DREAMS. HAD SHE HEARD RIGHT? WAS THIS A PROPOSAL? NOW IT WAS PEARL WHO WAS NERVOUS. THIS CHARACTER WAS PLAYING FOR KEEPS. NOT FOR A MONTH, A YEAR, FOREVER. SHE HAD TO ASK HIM AGAIN...

HOWARD, ARE YOU SURE? YOU DON'T KNOW ME!

I KNOW YOU WELL ENOUGH TO WANT YOU FOR MY WIFE, PEARL!



PEARL WAS ECSTATIC, SHE GLOWED IN HER UNHOPED-FOR TRIUMPH, AND WHEN HE ASKED...

WILL YOU COME UP  
TO MY APARTMENT,  
PEARL?  
OH, YES,  
HOW? YES...



THEY WENT UP...HE, HOLDING HER HAND IN A TIGHT FEVERISH GRIP, HIS BREATHING QUICKENED WITH EXCITEMENT...AND SHE, FOLLOWING EAGERLY, ANXIOUS TO CONVINCE HIM OF HIS WISE CHOICE, ANXIOUS TO THANK HIM...



IN HERE...THE  
BEDROOM...  
YES, HOWIE...

HE OPENED THE BEDROOM DOOR AND SHOVED PEARL IN. SHE HEARD THE LOCK CLICK BEHIND HIM...HEARD HIS LOW THROATED SMILE. SHE PEERED INTO THE BLOOM...



ESTHER? I  
BROUGHT ANOTHER  
ONE...  
ESTHER??  
WHO'S SHE?

AND THEN PEARL SAW THE COFFIN IN THE BLOOM - THE OLD COFFIN WITH THE LID SQUEAKING OPEN...THE PALE WHITE FIGURE RISING FROM ITS...BITS OF EARTH CROPPING FROM ITS FLOWING BLACK CAPE...THE RAZOR-SHARP SNAKE-LIKE HANDS...THE BEZING SPITTLE...



MY GOD! WHAT IS IT,  
HOWIE? WHAT IS IT?  
THIS IS MY WIFE,  
PEARL! SHE'S A  
VAMPIRE!

HOWARD PUSHED PEARL TOWARDS THE PROTHING, GRAYING, HIDEOUS CREATURE...

I TOLD YOU I WANTED  
YOU FOR MY WIFE!  
NO! NO!  
OH, LORD!



AND HOWARD SAT DOWN AND WATCHED WITH SATISFACTION AS HIS LIVING-DEAD WIFE SPREAD UPON THIS LATEST DESERVING VICTIM WHO WAS BROUGHT. HE LISTENED EAGERLY TO HER SLUTTISH SLUMPING NOISES. HE NODDED APPROVINGLY AS THE PINK GLOW CAME BACK INTO HER SUNKEN CHEEKS, AND PEARL'S WRITHING BODY BECAME PALER AND PALER AND PALER.



SO POOR PEARL FINALLY FOUND HER LAST HUSBAND-SUCKER! ONLY IN THIS CASE, IT WAS THE HUSBAND'S WIFE WHO WAS THE SUCKER...BLOOD-SUCKER! THAT IS! HER, HOW? WELL, THE OLD WITCH TAKES ITS WITH ANOTHER OF HER CREEPY CAULDRON-CONCOCTIONS SO ALL STEP ASIDE WHILE SHE SLURPS SLIME AT YOU. BY THE WAY, I HEAR SOME PEOPLE FINALLY JOINED THE E.C. FAN-ADDICT CLUB. THAT'S GOOD NEWS! I WAS BEGINNING TO BE AFRAID THE MEMBERSHIP WAS GOING TO BE LIMITED TO ER...THINGS. SHALL WE SAY? BEEP NOW, PEOPLE TOO? WELL, WHAT'D YA KNOW? BYE!



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HIE, HIE! COME IN, CREEPS. YOU'RE IN THE RIGHT PLACE FOR RETCHING... THE HAUNT OF FEAR, AND, *WHY DIDN'T I SAY THAT'S FRENCH, FRIENDS!* HAVE I GOT A REVOLTING TALE FOR YOU, WANT TO KNOW WHAT'S COOKING IN MY GROSSER CAST-IRON CAULDRON? WELL, YOUR OLD WITCH HAS A SOFT BLAS OF BRISBY GAS ABOUT A TERROR TIME AND A FAST OPERATOR WHO BROUGHT A MESSY MATTER TO A HEAD AND CUT IT OFF THERE! SO Wipe the DRUGS FROM YOUR CHINS, SEND YOUR FLOPPY EARS THIS WAY, AND LISTEN TO THIS DELIGHTFUL TALE OF BUTCHERY CALLED...

## The Sliceman Cometh

THAT 10TH OF MARCH, 1756, WAS GRIM AND GREY WITH RAIN THREATENING IN THE DIMMOUS BLACK CLOUDS THAT BILLOWED OVERHEAD. A RAIN WIND HOWLED FURIOUSLY ABOUT THE CRIMSON-STAINED GUILLOTINE, BUT IT COULD NOT CLEAR THE REPULED AIR OF ITS ABATOR AROMA. UNDERFOOTDOOR- STONES WERE SLIPPERY WITH CONGEALING SORE, WHILE FRESH WARM BLOOD BUMBLED IN A CONSTANT FLOW DOWN THE BUTTERS AS THE GREAT BLADE HISSED DOWN AGAIN AND AGAIN, HEAPING THE BASKET WITH WIDE-EYED NOBLE HEADS THERE, CALMLY, STOOD THE MAN OF THE HOUR, THE EXECUTIONER, *ANDRÉ MACHE*, AND THE JEERING, HOOTING, RED-BONNETED CITIZENRY, READING AN URGENT MESSAGE JUST HANDED TO HIM.

"AND IF A THOUSAND GOLD LOUIS INTEREST YOU, THEN VISIT ME AT 48 RUE ORGON." HMM? *PIERRE*, I MUST LEAVE! CARRY ON FOR ME, JEHO!

A PLEASURE, *ANDRÉ*.

AS *ANDRÉ* HURRIED AWAY FROM THE ANGRY SCENE, HIS BLOOD-SEALED SHOES LEAVING RED IMPRINTS ON THE PAVING STONES—HE EAGERLY RE-READ THE NOTE HE'D RECEIVED.

A THOUSAND GOLD LOUIS! SACRÉ BLEU!



SOON, THE EXECUTIONER WAS BOWLED  
UPPERED INTO A SPACIOUS ROOM OF  
AS PUE CUBBYBY A VERNAL-LOOKING  
MAN WITH AN UNCTUOUS GRINNER  
ABOUT HIM. . .

AN, M'SIEU VACHE! I AM JEAN  
COURBEAU. IT IS A GREAT  
HONOR INDEED TO HAVE SO  
IMPORTANT AND DISTINGUISHED  
A VISITOR AS YOU IN MY HOME. . .

YOU MENTIONED  
SOMETHING ABOUT  
ONE THOUSAND  
GOLD LOUIS.

CITIZEN  
COURBEAU THAT  
IS WHY I AM  
HERE.

MAKE YOUR-  
SELF COM-  
FORTABLE.  
WELCOME HERE...

SOME OF THE  
FINEST WINE  
FROM MY CELLAR  
AND NOW. . . I  
WILL EXPLAIN  
WHY I SENT FOR  
YOU. . .

ACTUALLY, THIS HOUSE IS NOT  
MINE. IT BELONGS TO MY BROTHER  
CLAUDE. BEING THE ELDEST, MY  
FATHER LEFT HIM EVERYTHING...  
A FORTUNE W'EDU. SHOULD ANY-  
THING HAPPEN TO CLAUDE, I'D  
GET IT ALL. YOU UNDERSTAND?



YOU WANT ME TO KID  
YOU OF YOUR BROTHER,  
CITIZEN COURBEAU?  
BARRISTO! YOU INSULTATE.  
I WOULD MURDER A MAN...  
EVEN FOR THAT MUCH  
BOLD?

NOT MURDER. WOMAN!  
MERELY AN ACCUSATION  
TO THE RIGHT PARTIES...  
AND THE HEAD OF  
ANOTHER ROYALIST  
SYMPATHIZER WOULD  
ROLL INTO YOUR BASKET.



ALTHAT IS A DIFFERENT STORY.  
M'SIEU COURBEAU, IF YOUR BROTHER  
IS ONE OF THEM... A ROYALIST...  
THEN I WILL BE GLAD TO EXPOSE  
HIM. IT WOULD BE MY DUTY!

YOU ARE A WISE  
MAN, M'SIEU VACHE.  
DO NOT THINK I AM  
NOT FOND OF MY  
BROTHER. BUT THERE  
ARE TWO THINGS I  
LOVE MORE: FRANCE  
AND MONEY?



HERE IS HALF THE PAYMENT...  
500 GOLD LOUIS. YOU WILL  
RECEIVE THE REST WHEN I HAVE  
PROOF THAT MY BROTHER HAS  
BEEN SECURED? SO MANY  
HEARS FALL THESE DAYS...

YOU SHALL HAVE  
UNDENIABLE  
EVIDENCE,  
CITIZEN COURBEAU.  
I WILL SEE TO  
IT! AND NOW, NOW  
GOON. . .



AND SO, THAT VERY DAY, ANDRE VACHE MADE HIS ACCU-  
SATION. . .

I HAVE IT FROM HIS OWN BROTHER'S LIPS,  
CITIZEN MAMM! CLAUDE COURBEAU IS IN  
FULL SYMPATHY WITH THE NOBILITY,  
DESPISES THE NEWLY-FORMED  
REPUBLIC AND WOULD BETRAY IT  
AT THE FIRST OPPORTUNITY. . .

ORDER  
THE  
ARREST  
OF CLAUDE  
COURBEAU.



THE NEXT DAY, CITIZEN MARAT AND SIX OTHER JUDGES OF THE COMMUNE LOOKED DOWN COLDLY AND IMPASSIVELY AT THE ACCUSED...



THE CHAMBER, THROTTLED WITH ANGRY RAISED CITIZENS, SHOOK WITH THE HORROR CLAMORING FOR STILL ANOTHER HEAD...



CITIZEN MARAT HELD UP HIS HAND AND A HUSH FELL OVER THE CHAMBER. THEN, SCOWLING DARKLY AT THE ACCUSED, HE WHISPERED...



HE LOOKED AT HIS FELLOW JUDGES...



CITIZEN MARAT BARRD HIS HAND AND DROPPED A SQUARE OF BLACK CLOTH. AND WITH THIS SYMBOLIC GESTURE, THE CROWD ROARED ITS APPROVAL...



ANDRE VACHE LED CLAUDE TO THE MONSTROUS MACHINE AS WHITING NEEDLES CLICKED AND THE THROAT JERRED...



THE RED-BONNETED CROWD WAITED IN TENSE SILENCE AS THE HEAVY RAPE WAS HOISTED HIGH BETWEEN THE SLOTTED PARALLEL BEAMS. THEN, WITH A WHINING CRESCENDO TO ACCOMPANY THE RAZOR-SHARP BLADE'S DESCENT, THE CROWD EXPLODED IN A LUSTY CHEER AS IT HIT... CUTTING THROUGH FLESH AND BONE, SLAMMING INTO THE BLOCK...



ANDRÉ CAUGHT CLAUDE'S HEAD IN A GRASP AS HOT BLOOD SPURTED FROM THE SEVERED VEINS AND ARTERIES OF THE DECAPITATED BODY, SPRAYING HIS FACE AND CLOTHES. HE HELD UP THE HEAD-HEAVY BAG WITH A TRIUMPHANT GRIN. THE CROWD SCREAMED...



HE MOVED THROUGH THE SILENT DESERTED STREETS, HEARING THE CHEERS FROM THE BULLDOZING SQUARE AND THINKING ONLY OF THE GOLD HE HAD EARNED. BEFORE LONG, HE ARRIVED AT 49 RUE DU BOIS...



ANDRÉ VACHE REACHED INTO THE BAG, PULLED FORTH ITS CONTENTS, AND HELD IT DANGLING BY THE HAIR...



JEAN COURBEAU TURNED SICKLY GREEN. HE WHISPERED SOFTLY...



ANDRÉ WENT LIGHT-HEARTEDLY THROUGH THE EVENING STREETS, THE GOLD JINGLING IN HIS POCKETS, THE BAG SWINGING MERRILY AT HIS SIDE. A COACH RUMBLLED BY, AND HE PLAYFULLY TOSSED THE RED-SCARFED BAG THROUGH ITS WINDOW...



THE COACH STOPPED. A TALL MAN GOT OUT AND CARRIED THE GOBBY RUMBLE BACK TO ANDRÉ...



THE MAN HURLED ANDRÉ THE BAG...



THE COACH RUMBLLED OFF AND ANDRÉ WALKED ON, DETERMINED TO RID HIMSELF OF THE HEAD. AS HE CROSSED ONE OF THE SEINE BRIDGES, HE TOSSED IT OVER THE PARAPET...





ANDRE DID NOT SEE THE SACK LAND IN THE BOTTOM OF A BOAT THAT CAME FROM UNDER THE BRIDGE AND THE HEAD ROLLED OUT AND THE FISHERMEN GASPED.



HOW DO ORIENT WHAT KIND OF FRENCH JOKE IS THIS?

LOOK! IT IS VAGNE, THE EXECUTIONER!

I WAS IN THE SQUARE WHEN HE GOT THIS HEAD TODAY, HEART! HE HELD IT UP FOR ALL TO SEE. HE WAS VERY PROUD OF IT! IT MUST HAVE BEEN SOMEONE VERY SPECIAL!



THEN HE DROPPED IT ACCORDING TO THE TALENT! COME, EDWARD, WE WILL PUT OURSELVES IN GOOD WITH HIM BY RETURNING IT!

WHEN ANDRE RETURNED TO HIS ROOMING HOUSE, HE WAS GREETED BY HIS LANDLADY, MADAME BARRETTE...



TWO CITIZENS LEFT JUNE FOR YOU, MR. VAGNE!

NO! NO! IT IS IMPOSSIBLE!

ANDRE HURRIED OUT INTO THE STREET WITH THE BLOOD-SOAKED BAG. HE STOPPED OVER A SEWER-GRATE...



OH, ANNE, CLAUDE COURBEAU! SO THEY PLAY GAMES WITH US! WELL, PERHAPS THE RATS DOWN THERE WILL FIND YOU TEMPTING...

THE HEAD DROPPED TO ANDRE'S FEET AS IT TORE THROUGH THE SACK'S BLOOD-ROTTED BOTTOM. THE CLOTH DISAPPEARED INTO THE GARB-REeking DARKNESS. ANDRE HESITATED, STUPIDLY, AS AN OCREAT, HEAPED WITH HEADLESS CORPSES, ROUNDED THE CORNER...



VAGNE! IT IS GOOD TO SEE YOUR LOOKS RECOGNIZE SOME OF YOUR CUSTOMERS?

TAKE THEM AWAY, BOBIN! GO BURY THEM!

ANDRE STOOD OVER THE GRINNING HEAD, HIDING IT FROM THE CART-DRIVER'S VIEW...



I'M IN NO HURRY VAGNE. LET US STOP FOR A GRIM! OUR HEADLESS FRIENDS CAN WAIT!

LET ME ALONE, BOBIN! GO BURY YOUR FOUL-SMELLING DEAD!

BOBIN SHRUGGED AND THE CART RUMBLING OFF. ANDRE TURNED TO THE HEAD, ANGRY AND FRUSTRATED. HE REACHED FOR IT SAVAGELY...



TORMENT ME, WILL YOU, CLAUDE COURBEAU! WELL, WE'LL SEE ABOUT THAT!

THE EXECUTIONER CAME UPON A MARKET OPEN LATE AND LIT DIMLY BY OIL LAMPS. HE PASSED THE STALLS OF FRUITS AND VEGETABLES AND SMILED AT THE JOKE HE MADE...



FREE AT LAST OF HIS PAINFUL BURDEN, ANDRÉ CELEBRATED HIS NEW-FOUND FORTUNE AT AN INN WITH A GLASS OF BRANDY. THEN HE RETURNED HOME AND, MEETING HIS LANDLADY, GOOD-NATUREDLY RELIEVED HER OF HER SHOPPING BASKET...



THEY ENTERED THE ROOMING HOUSE TOGETHER AND WENT INTO THE KITCHEN.



CLAUDE COURBEM'S HEAD GRINNED UP AT ANDRÉ FROM AMONG THE VEGETABLES. MADAME BARETTE UNFETTERED OUT ONTO THE KITCHEN TABLE...



THE LANDLADY MOANED AND TURNED AWAY, SIDE ANDRÉ, SHAKING UNCONTROLLABLY, FLUNG OPEN THE SHUTTERS AND THREW THE BARGOYLE-LIKE SCULL INTO THE DARK STREET BELOW...



A MOMENT LATER, MONSIEUR ETIENNE, ANOTHER BOMBER, ENTERED... ON HIS DOUR FACE, A LOOK MORE OF PATHOS THAN ANGER... IN HIS HAND, THE HEAD...



ANDRÉ PUNED, THE BLOOD DRAINING FROM HIS FACE. HE SEIZED A CLEAVER FROM THE TABLE, THEN TURNED AND SWATHED THE HEAD FROM MONSIEUR ETIENNE.



ANDRÉ STUMBLED TO HIS ROOM AND WITH A RAGE THAT VIBED IN MADNESS, HE KNOCKED ON THE FLOOR AND KICKED AT THE LIFELESS FLESH AND BONE UNTIL HE'D REDUCED IT INTO AN UNRECOGNIZABLE HEAP OF MESS—MELT.



THEN, WEAK AND EXHAUSTED, HIS INTERIORS ROLLING AND GULVERING LIKE JELLY, THE EXECUTIONER SANK ON HIS BED IN A COMA-LIKE STUPOR.



AN HOUR PASSED. PARIS WAS ASLEEP. THE NIGHT WAS STILL EXCEPT FOR AN OX-CART THAT RUMBLLED BY BELOW. ANDRÉ STIRRED AT ITS NOISE AND SAT UP, HE LISTENED TO THE FRONT DOOR OPEN, THE HEAVY DRAGGING FOOTSTEPS ON THE STAIRS... THE KNOCK OF HIS OWN DOOR TURN... AND THEN...



THE HEADLESS CORPSE STUMBLED TOWARD ANDRÉ, ITS HAND DESTIGULATING TOWARD ITS NECK, POINTING.



THE DECAPITATED BODY HESITATED, AS IF BEMODERED AS TO WHAT TO DO. THEN IT CRASHED FORWARD AGAIN... REACHING FOR ANDRÉ... REACHING... REACHING...



MAIGNE BARITTE HEARD THE EAR-SPLITTING SCREAM THAT ECHOED THROUGH HER ROOMING HOUSE AND RUSHED TO ANDRÉ'S ROOM WITH A CANDLE. BUT AS SHE REACHED THE DOOR, IT OPENED, THE BODY OF CLAUDE GOURBEAU STUMBLED OUT, AND ON ITS SHOULDERS, CRIMSON DRIPPING FROM ITS TORN AND RUPTURED BLOOD VESSELS, SAT THE SAKRILEGIOUS TORN-OFF HEAD OF ANDRÉ VACHE.



HIE, HIE! WELL, THAT'S ONE WAY TO GET AHEAD IN THE HORROR-EX-100IES! AND NOW, IT'S TIME TO GHOST LK'S MUCK-WAD FOR THIS ISSUE! HOPE YOU WON'T BORED STIFF! WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE VAULT OF HORROR... WHEN WE'LL BE HEADING



BACK YOUR WAY WITH MORE TOP HORROR YARN! TILL THEN, THINK ABOUT JOINING THE E.G. FAN-ARNDT CLUB! DON'T BE A SUCKER AND DO IT! JUST THINK ABOUT IT!

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# TALES FROM THE CRYPT

FEATURING...



THE CRYPT-KEEPER



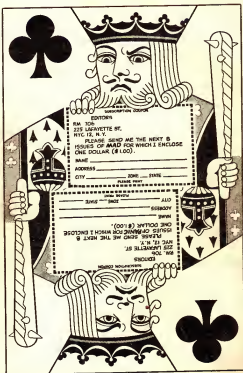
THE OLD WITCH



THE VAULT-KEEPER



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# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEH, HEH! MENACE, MYHONEY! FINEY! YOU'VE COME TO THE RIGHT CREEP-COUST, 'CAUSE THAT'S MY RACKET! AH, YOUR OLD CRYPT-KEEPER IS JUST FLOWING WITH FRIGHT! TODAY, HOW ABOUT GOING FOR A RACKET I'LL DRIVE YOU NUTS. READY? THEN WITHOUT FURTHER HOO, I'LL START OFF MY MORBID MAD WITH AN ISLET ISLAND STORY OF A STARVING SAILOR AND A RAVENOUS RAT. I CALL THIS HIDEOUSLY HORRIBLE HUNK OF HISTORY. . .

## TELESCOPE



THE S.S. GRAMMELL WAS NO MATCH FOR THE VIOLENT SOUTH SEA TEMPEST. THE MIGHTY WIND RULLED HER UPON A REEF AND SHE POUNDERED IN EIGHT FATHOMS OF BRINY BLUE. SOON, THE STORM WAS SPENT, THE SHIP GONE, AND THERE REMAINED BUT ONE HUMAN SURVIVOR...A SEAMAN...ERIC WALFORD. HE CLUNG DESPERATELY TO A FLOATING PLANK TILL IT REACHED THE SHALLOWS OFF A SMALL CORAL ISLE. THEN, HALF-CONSCIOUS, HE CRAWLED TO THE SANDY SHORE. . .



BUT ERIC WAS NOT THE ONLY SURVIVOR. A RAT... HALF-GROWNED AND FRIGTHENED... HAD CLUNG TO THE OTHER END OF THE SAME PLANK. AND NOW IT TOO, STRUGGLED ASHORE.



THE RAT AND THE MAN WERE THE ONLY LIFE ON THIS DESERT ISLE. NOT A TREE... NOT A PLANT... NOT A BLADE OF GRASS. EVEN ON THIS SHARPEN CORAL ROCK, IT WAS FINE ACRES OF NOTHING...



FOR A LONG TIME, ERIC LAY IN THE BLISTERING SUN, EXHAUSTED. THEN, FEELING A TERRIBLE THIRST, HE BOUGHT OUT AND FOUND A SMALL PUDDLE LEFT BY THE STORM IN A SHALLOW DEPRESSION ON TOP OF A CORAL ROCK. HE DRANK BREEDLY...



WHEN HE HAD SLACKED HIS THIRST, ERIC LOOKED UP SUDDENLY, SENSING THAT HE WAS BEING WATCHED. HE STARTED, HIS THROAT CACKED WITH A RIDING SCORSE. THE GREATER GREY SHIP'S RAT WAS WATCHING HIM WITH IT'S READY GLITTERING EYES...



ERIC BACKED AWAY, THE RAT SCURRED FORWARD TO THE TINY POOL AND DRANK. ERIC'S FACE WENT WHY WITH DISGUST...



THE CASTAWAYS... THE MAN AND THE RAT... KEPT SOME DISTANCE APART. AND YET, THEY SHARED A COMMON LONELINESS. EACH FOUND AT LEAST A LITTLE COMFORT IN SEEING THE OTHER NEAR...



THOROUGHLY EXHAUSTED, BOTH SLEPT THE NIGHT THROUGH. IT WASN'T UNTIL THEY AWOKED THE FOLLOWING MORNING THAT THEY FELT THE FIRST SHARP PAINS OF HUNGER. ERIC SEARCHED THE ENTIRE BEACH...



THE RAT, TOO, SNIPPED EVERY INCH OF THE ISLAND BUT FOUND NOTHING TO SATISFY ITS GROWING APPETITE. SOON, THE MAN AND THE RAT FACES EACH OTHER WITH A DIFFERENT LOOK IN THEIR EYES: A HUNGRY LOOK.



THAT DAY, HUNGER SHAWED AT THE SURVIVORS' INWARDS, AND WHEN NIGHT CAME AGAIN, ERIC SLEPT RESTLESSLY. SUDDENLY, HE SAT UP WITH A START...



SOMETHING'S HEAR ME...  
WATCHING ME.

IN THE BRIGHT MOONLIGHT THAT BATHED THE ISLAND, ERIC SAW THE RAT... TEN FEET AWAY... STARING AT HIM... STARING GREEDILY, HE SHUDDERED...



GET AWAY FROM ME, YOU  
FLA-ROOEN VERMIN!

THE DARK-GREY ROBBENT DREW BACK ITS LIPS IN A FIERCE GRIN. THE SEAWARD SEAMAN HURLED A HANDFUL OF SAND AT IT...



FILTHY DEVIL!

THE RAT FLED. ERIC SLEPT NO MORE THAT NIGHT AND HIS VIOLENCE WAS REWARDED. SEVERAL TIMES THE RAT CAME CLOSE.



HAVE A CARE, MY SHEARIN' LITTLE  
FRIEND... BY TOMORROW, I MAY BE  
LESS PARTICULAR WHAT I  
EAT MYSELF!

THE NEXT MORNING, ERIC SAW HIS SOLE LIVING COMPANION SLUTTING ITSELF ON DRY SEAWeed THAT HAD BEEN WASHED ASHORE. THE SEAMAN SWALLOWED A MOUTHFUL, THEN, HE AND THE RAT ABANDONED THE FOUL NESS AT THE SAME TIME...



DOODN! I... OH... I COULD NEVER  
HELP THAT SLIME DOWN.

ERIC'S MOUTH AND THROAT WERE DRIER THAN-EVEN NOW. HIS LIPS WERE FURCHED AND CRACKED. HIS HUNGER PAINED HIM. IT WAS LATER THAT SAME MORNING THAT SEVERAL OUTRIGGER BOATS APPEARED OFFSHORE... MANNED BY NATIVES FISHING WITH NETS. ERIC SHOUTED HOARSELY AT THEM AND WAVED HIS ARMS.



HELP! HELP! FOR GOD'S SAKE, GET  
ME OFF THIS CURSED CHUNK OF HADES!

THERE WAS A SUDDEN FLURRY OF EXCITEMENT AMONG THE NATIVE FISH-ERMEN... MUCH CHATTERING AND POINTING AT THE LONELY FIGURE ON THE BEACH...



WITH FEAR IN THEIR EYES FOR "THE ISLAND DEVIL," THEY FEWER-ONLY HAILED IN THEIR NETS...



...AND PADDLED SWIFTLY AWAY, LEAVING ERIC WITH NOTHING BEFORE HIM BUT THE BROAD EXpanse OF TORQUOSE SEA. NUMB WITH DIS-APPOINTMENT, HE SANK TO THE SAND...



FINALLY, HIS THIRST COMPELLING HIM, ERIC CRAWLED BACK TO THE CORAL ROCK TO DRINK FROM THE TINY POOL, NO LONGER CARING THAT THE RAT HAD DRUNK THERE TOO...



THE RAT, TOO, CAME TO INVESTIGATE THE DRIED-UP DE-PRESSION. ERIC HURLED A ROCK AT IT... ANGRILY... DESPERATELY. HE MISSED...



TOO WEAR TO PURSUE HIS PREY, ERIC STOOD CROAKING AFTER THE RAT AS IT CRAWLED AWAY...



THAT AFTERNOON, A SMALL SEA BIRD SOARED OVERHEAD, CROPPING A FISH FROM ITS BEAK. AS THE BIRD SWOOPED TO RECOVER ITS PREY, ERIC FLUNG A ROCK AT IT WITH ALL OF HIS REMAINING STRENGTH...



THEN, ERIC SLUMPED NEARLY TO THE HOT WHITE SAND...

THE BIRD LAY DEAD NEAR THE WATER'S EDGE WITH ITS HALF-SWALLOWED MORSEL. ERIC SUFFERED A PLEASURABLE AGONY AS HE INCHED TOWARD HIS BUTTING BEAL.



BUT THE OTHER CASTERAW SAW THIS PLUMP FEATHERED PRIDE AND, DRIVEN BY THE MADDENING PAINS OF HUNGER IN ITS BELLY, THE RAT, TOO, CRAWLED WEARILY TOWARD THE FALLEN GULL.



NOW ERIC SAW THE RAT, AND THE RAT SAW ERIC, EACH STRAINED MOVEMENT BENEATH THAT FLESH-ROASTING SUN WAS A TORMENT FOR BOTH CREATURES. THE MAN, THE RAT... AND ERIC WENT TO SEE HIS GRIZZLED RIVAL MOVE AHEAD OF HIM.



GET AWAY, BLAST YOU!  
NO! NO...

THE RAT WAS THERE NOW, NOT TAKING THE TIME TO SNIFF OR TEAR AT ITS FOOD, BUT GULPING AT THE BIRD, SWALLOWING IT WHOLE.



NO! OH, LORD...

AND AT THE SAME TIME, ERIC HAD CLOSED THE GAP SO THAT THERE WAS BUT A SHORT YARD BETWEEN THEM. WITH ENORMOUS EFFORT, ERIC RAISED HIMSELF, THEN FELL FORWARD, TRYING TO CATCH HIS ENEMY.



NOW I'VE GOT YOU.

FINDING STRENGTH IN FEAR, THE RAT LEAPED ASIDE, SO THAT ERIC'S FINGERS JUST BRUSHED ITS SHORT-HAIRED GUSKY FUR.



I... I... CAN'T SOB...  
CAN'T GO ON...

FOR A LONG TIME THE MAN AND THE RAT LAY PROSE ON THE STEAMING SAND, EACH STUDING THE OTHER'S EYES, AND THEN ERIC SPOKE...

IT'S YOU OR ME! I GET YOU... NOW... OR YOU'LL WAIT TILL I'M TOO WEAK TO MOVE!

THE FARMISHED BEGIAN STRUGGLED TO HIS KNEES, REDDING HIS BLOW CREEPING PURPLE. THE RAT NODDED AWAY WEARILY...

THEN YOU'LL EAT OUT MY EYEBALLS AND THE FLESH OFF MY FACE! YOU'LL RAT SLOW SO I'LL LAST...

THERE WAS NO TIME FOR THE RAT TO SWALLOW IT'S STILL WARM BIRD, LEAVING TINY THREE-PRONGED MARKS IN THE WET SAND. IT BACKED SLIDELY INTO THE SEA...

WELL, IT'S NOT GONNA BE ME IF IT'S GONNA BE YOU!

THE RAT TURNED IN THE WATER, NOT GIVING UP ITS PREY, AND STARTED SWIMMING FROM THE ISLAND. ERIC, CRAWLED INTO THE WATER AFTER IT, SWIMMING WITH LIMPLY CHOURING APMS...

GREEDILY HOLDING ITS BULGING MOUTHFUL, THE RAT LOST BREATH... SWALLOWED WATER THROUGH ITS NOSTRILS... BEGAN TO SINK. THE MAN REACHED OUT AND SAVED THE DROWNING RAT...

...SAVED IT FOR HIMSELF! HUNGRY AND WITH HUNGER, NOT WAITING TO RETURN TO SHORE WITH HIS STRANDED PRIZE, THE MAN STUFFED THE WATER-BLOATED RAT INTO HIS MOUTH, TAIL FIRST...

AT THAT VERY MOMENT, A SLEEK BLACK FIN CUT ITS WAY THROUGH THE BLUE, SLIDING SHIFTLY AND SILENTLY TOWARD ITS FLOATING HUMAN GAMBIT...



THE GREAT HUNGRY SHARK CLOSED IN WITH HUGE JAWS AWAPE, THE DOUBLE ROW OF RIPSAW TEETH READY AND EAGER TO TEAR. IT CAME UP BEHIND ERIC...



A VIOLENT TURBULENCE FOLLOWED... A THRASHING AND A SPLASHING OF FOAMY BRINE. THE NATIVE OUTRIGGERS APPEARED THEN, BRAWNY ARMS RHYTHMICALLY THRUSTING PADDLES...



THEY'D RETURNED WITH THEIR CHIEF TO WORSHIP THE ISLAND GOD. INSTEAD, THEY SAW THE VICIOUS TIGER OF THE SEA. THE POWERFUL POLYNESIANS SHAKED UP SHORT, SHARP SAFFS. ONE NATIVE KNELT, HIS SPEAR POISED... THEN LET IT FLY...



HE STRUCK THE SPUTE SQUARELY... UNDER THE SPINE. THERE FOLLOWED A FURIOUS THRASHING AS THE OTHERS HOOKED THEIR SAFFS INTO THE WOUNDED KILLER SHARK AND HEAVED IT ONBOARD AND STOOD SAYING:



...GAWKING AT THE STILL, DEAD GENIUS OF THE DEEP, FOR STOKING OUT OF ITS TOOTH-LINED MOUTH WAS THE UNBRAWLED HEAD OF ERIC WALFORD... AND OUT OF ERIC'S MOUTH, THE HEAD OF THE BEAK-EYED RAT. AND OUT OF THE RAT'S MOUTH, THE HULL'S HEAD... AND OUT OF THE MOUTH OF THE HULL PROTRUDED THE HEAD OF THE TINY FISH.



HEH, HEH! SO NONE OF THEM GUYE FINISHED THEIR MEAL, EH, KIDNEY? WELL, LEARN A LESSON FROM THIS LITTLE SCREAM-STORY! NEVER BITE OFF MORE THAN YOU CAN SWALLOW! SOMEBODY MIGHT GET AHEAD OF YOU. AND NOW THAT THE PETRIFYING PAGE HAS BEEN SET, THE VAULT-KEEPER UNRAITS WITH HIS TELL-TALE... A NIGHTMARISH TALE OF MANIACAL MURDER. I'LL DO YOU LATER WITH ANOTHER GRAVE TALE OF TERROR. TILL THEN, LET ME



LEAVE YOU WITH THIS MORBID THOUGHT. DON'T COUNT YOUR GAYNES UNTIL THEY'RE MAFONETED! HEY! NOW!

# E.C. WENT TO SEA IN SEARCH OF ANOTHER NEW TREND...



**AND WE CAME UP WITH...**  
**SAGAS OF THE SEA, SHIPS, PLUNDER AND...**

# PIRACY

**NOW YOU SEARCH  
FOR IT!**

BUT IF YOU *CAN'T FIND PIRACY*  
AT YOUR LOCAL NEWSSTAND, YOU  
CAN *SUBSCRIBE!* JUST FILL OUT  
THE COUPON AND MAIL, TOGETHER  
WITH *ONE HUNDRED PIECES OF  
CENT* (THAT'S ONE BUCK, LAND-  
LUBBERS!), TO:

THE SEASICK EDITORS OF  
*PIRACY*  
ROOM 106  
225 LAFAYETTE STREET  
N.Y.C. 10, N.Y.

OKAY, BLUDE RATS! YOU SHANGHAIED ME!  
I ENCLOSE #1 CO FOR THE NEXT EIGHT ISSUES  
OF *PIRACY!*

NAME

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE  ZONE  NO



HERE'S A DELIGHTFUL SAMPLE  
OF ESCAPE LITERATURE CALLED...

# THE SUBSTITUTE



FOR SEVEN LONG YEARS, HENRI DUVAL HAD SUFFERED THE EQUATORIAL HEAT AND THE BLAZING SUN AND THE TORTURED LABORS OF THE FRENCH PENAL COLONY... AND ALL BECAUSE HE'D POISONED THE HUSBAND OF THE WOMAN HE'D LOVED. FOR SEVEN LONG YEARS, HE'D SWEATED AND SLAVED AT THE IMPOSSIBLE TASK OF HACKING CLEARINGS INTO THAT JUNGLE ISLAND, AN IMPOSSIBLE TASK, FOR SO SOONER HAD A TRACT BEEN CLEARED THAN THE RELENTLESS TROPICAL OVERGROWTH CLOSED IN AGAIN LIKE A SNAKE TIE. BUT THIS WAS THE PUNISHMENT FOR MURDER AND HENRI WAS FORCED TO UNDERGO ITS MISERY, LEFT ONLY TO DREAM OF COOL PARS AND COOL WINE AND THE COOL LIPS OF A WOMAN. AND THEN, ONE DAY, HE DISCOVERED THE HERB...

"SACRÉ D'EN! IT IS HELLBORE!"



HENRI WAS AN EXPERT ON POISONS, AND HE KNEW HELLBORE... THE HERB WITH THE ROOT STOCK THAT YIELDED THE POISONOUS BLOSSOMS. HELLBORE! HE IMMEDIATELY RECOGNIZED THE PLANT AND TONED IT FROM THE SPONGY JUNGLE FLOOR, STUFFING THE SHORT ROOTS INTO HIS BLOUSE...

"HEY, YOU! DUVAL! KEEP THAT MACHETE GOING!"



WHEN THE BLAZING EQUATORIAL SUN HAD DUNK INTO THE WESTERN SKY AND THE EXHAUSTED REDHAIRIED PRISONERS HAD BEEN MARCHED BACK INTO THE PENAL COLONY COMPOUND, HENRI DUVAL HAD MADE HIS PLANS...

"THEY BRAG THAT NO ONE HAS EVER ESCAPED FROM THIS ISLAND PURGATORY WELL... I... HENRI DUVAL... WILL BE THE FIRST!"



HENRI HID THE KILLERBEE ROOTS IN HIS CRAWLING MATTRESS, AND THE NEXT DAY BEGAN TO GATHER THE THINGS HE NEEDED. WHEN THE CLAN'S CREWS WERE AGAIN MARCHED OUT INTO THE STEAMING JUNGLE, HE CHASED JUST THE RIGHT SIZE BAMBOO STALK.



CAREFULLY HE GATHERED JUST THE RIGHT SHAPE PALM FRONDS.



AND WHEN THE GUARD WARTY LOOKED, HE HACKED JUST THE RIGHT AMOUNT OF CORN BARK.



THERE HE HID IN HIS SHIRT, AND THAT EVENING SUCCESSFULLY SMUGGLED THEM INTO THE COMPOUND. LATE THAT NIGHT, WHEN THE OTHER PRISONERS WERE ASLEEP, HENRI WORKED. WITH THE KNIFE HE'D STOLEN FROM THE MESS HALL, HE CAREFULLY CARVED THE CURVE OF CORN BARK INTO A SMOOTH, ROUND, FEARDROP SHAPE.



SLITTING THE ELONGATED END, HE INSERTED THE CORRECTLY SHAPED PALM FRONDS, TRIMMING THEM DOWN...



NEXT, INTO THE BULBOUS END OF THE CORN TEARDROP, HE INSERTED THE NEEDLE HE'D TAKEN FROM A FELLOW PRISONER'S SEWING KIT...



AND... POKE!... HENRI HAD FASHIONED AN APPROPRIATE DART... A DART THAT WOULD BE POISONED.



... AND BLOWN THROUGH THE HOLLOW BAMBOO STALK HE'D CUT...



ALL THAT NIGHT, HERRI PRACTISED WITH HIS BLOW-  
GUN UNTIL HIS AIM WAS DEADLY...



FINALLY, HE HID HIS MURDEROUS WEAPON, ALONG WITH THE  
HELLEBORE ROOTS, IN HIS MATTRESS... AND LAY DOWN FOR  
THE FEW HOURS OF SLEEP LEFT TO HIM...



THE NEXT DAY, HERRI FOUND TWO  
FLAT ROCKS AND BRUSHED THEM  
BACK INTO THE COMPOUND AS HE  
HAD DONE WITH THE OTHER THINGS...



THAT NIGHT, HE BROKED DOWN  
THE HELLEBORE ROOTS, CARE-  
FULLY CATCHING THE JUICE THAT  
RAN FROM THE PULVERIZED MEAT  
IN A TIN CUP...



THEN HE DIPPED HIS BART-NEEDLE  
INTO THE AWKWARD TOXIC POISON...



AND THE NEXT MORNING, AS THE GOVERNOR OF THE  
PENAL COLONY STRODE ACROSS THE COMPOUND'S  
GROUNDS ON HIS DAILY CONSTITUTIONAL, HERRI TOOK  
CAREFUL AIM...



...AND LET FLY HIS LETHAL MISSILE...



BY NIGHTFALL, THE GOVERNOR WAS DEAD...



... AND A POOR UNFORTUNATE PRISONER, IN WHOSE MATTRESS THE BLOW-GUN WAS FOUND, WAS WHIPPED TO DEATH - VAINLY PROTESTING HIS INNOCENCE TO THE LAST.



HENRI, ALONG WITH TWO OTHER PRISONERS, WAS LUCKILY ASSIGNED THE JOB OF BUILDING THE COFFIN IN WHICH THE DEMISED GOVERNOR'S BODY WOULD BE KEPT UNTIL THE ARRIVAL OF THE MONTHLY BOAT FROM THE CONTINENT.



THE GOVERNOR HAD BEEN A FAMOUS FRENCH NAVAL HERO, HENRI HAD PLANNED IT ALL! HE'D KNOWN THAT THE GOVERNOR'S BODY WOULD BE SHIPPED BACK TO FRANCE, HE'D COUNTED ON IT. THIS WAS HENRI DUVAL'S PLOT! THIS WAS THE MEANS FOR HIS ESCAPE.

AIR HOLES? WHY, HENRI? THE CORPSED ONCE IS DEAD! WHY DOES HE NEED AIR HOLES IN HIS COFFIN?

TO ALLOW FOR EXPANDING GASES, NOW AM I?



THE NIGHT BEFORE THE MONTHLY STEAMER'S EXPECTED ARRIVAL, HENRI SLIPPED FROM HIS BARRACKS AND HURRIED TO THE CHAPEL, WHERE THE GOVERNOR'S BODY LAY IN STATE IN THE CRUDE COFFIN.



HIS STRIPPED THE BODY OF ITS CLOTHES AND DRESSED IT IN HIS GRIMY PRISON UNIFORM.



THEN HE SLASHED AND HACKED THE FACE UNTIL IT WAS UNRECOGNIZABLE.



IN THE MORNING THEY WOULD FIND THE BODY AND THINK THAT AN **ENEMY OF HENRI DUBOIS** HAD **ATTACKED AND MURDERED** HIM DURING THE NIGHT. HENRI CARRIED THE DISFIGURED CORPSE INTO THE BAR-  
RACKS AND PLACED IT QUIETLY ON HIS COT...



THEN HE TOOK THE **FOOD** HE'D HIDDEN AND THE CAN OF **WATER** AND HURRIED BACK ACROSS THE COMPOUND TO THE CHAPEL...



...AND CLIMBED INTO THE RECENTLY VACATED COFFIN TO WAIT... TO WAIT FOR THEM TO COME AND CARRY HIM TO THE WRITING BOAT AND EVENTUAL FREEDOM...



THE NEXT MORNING FOOTSTEPS APPROACHED, AND SUDDENLY MEN'S HEARD POUNDING AND HAMMERING...



*SACRE DIEUX! THEY ARE  
HAILING ME IN!*

AT FIRST HENRI WAS TERRORIZED... BUT THEN HE CALMED DOWN AS HE REALIZED...

*RIGHT! WHEN I GET TO FRANCE,  
I WILL CERTAINLY HAVE AN OPPOR-  
TUNITY TO FREE MYSELF!  
IT IS NOTHING!*



HAPPILY, HENRI FELT HIS COFFIN LIFTED AND CARRIED OUT OF THE CHAPEL, ACROSS THE COMPOUND, DOWN TO THE PENAL COLONY'S WHARF...



...AND UP THE GANGPLANK OF THE SUPPLY SHIP...



HE LISTENED WITH RAGE TO THE SHRIEK OF THE LINES WHISTLE, THE MUFFLED ROAR OF ITS ENGINES. HE FELT THE GENTLE HEAVING AS THE SHIP BACKED OFF FROM THE PIER AND HEADED INTO THE OPEN SEA...



HE CALCULATED THE APPROXIMATE LENGTH OF THE VOYAGE AND REALIZED THAT HE WOULD HAVE TO PUT HIMSELF ON A STRICT RATIONING PROGRAM TO MAKE HIS MEAGER FOOD SUPPLY LAST. IT WAS HOURS LATER BEFORE HE AFFORDED HIMSELF HIS FIRST MORSEL WASHED DOWN BY ONE DULP OF THE TROPIC WATERS.



AND THAT NIGHT, THE RUMMING SHIP'S ENGINE LULLED HENRI INTO A PEACEFUL SLEEP...



BUT HE WAS AWAKENED RUDELY THE NEXT MORNING AS THE COFFIN WAS LIFTED BRUSQUELY AND CARRIED ON DECK...



HE LISTENED AS THE ENGINES STOPPED AND ONLY THE GENTLE LAPPING OF THE OCEAN WAVES DRIFTED THROUGH THE CONVENIENT AIR HOLES. AND THEN HE HEARD THE CAPTAIN'S VOICE, ORDERING...

...AND SO, IN COMPLIANCE WITH GOVERNOR MOLLERUS'S LAST REQUEST...



HENRI'S BLOOD FROZE IN HIS VEINS AS HE FELT THE COFFIN LIFTED TO THE SHIP'S BAIL AND SLID FORWARD...OVER IT...

WE COMMIT THE COFFIN CONTAINING HIS BODY TO THE DEEP...FOR BURIAL AT SEA...



HENRI'S SCREAM WAS CUT SHORT AS THE COFFIN HIT THE TOSSEING BRINE AND WATER ROULED IN THROUGH THE AIR HOLES, FILLING HIS FINE PRISON, FILLING HIS BLUE-BERING MOUTH...FILLING HIS GASPING LUNGS...



# A SPECIAL EDITORIAL

## THIS IS AN APPEAL FOR ACTION!

**THE PROBLEM:** Comics are under fire — horror and crime comics in particular. Due to the efforts of various "do-gooders" and "do-gooder" groups, a large segment of the public is being led to believe that certain comic magazines cause juvenile delinquency, warp the minds of America's youth, and affect the development of the personalities of those who read them! Among these "do-gooders" are: a psychiatrist who has made a lucrative career of attacking comic magazines, certain publishing companies who do not publish comics and who would benefit by their demise, many groups of adults who would like to blame their lack of ability as responsible parents on comic magazines blamed of on themselves, and various assorted headline hunters. These people are myriads. They complain to local police officials, to local magazine retailers, to local wholesalers, add to their complaints. They complain and complain and threaten and threaten. Eventually, everyone gets frightened. The newsdealer gets frightened. He removes the books from display. The wholesaler gets frightened. He refuses shipments. The congressman gets frightened. . . November is coming! They start an investigation. This wave of hysteria has seriously threatened the very existence of the whole comic magazine industry.

**WE BELIEVE:** Your editors sincerely believe that the claim of these crusaders — that comics are bad for children . . . is nonsense. If we, in the slightest way, thought that horror comics, crime comics, or any other kind of comics were harmful to our readers, we would cease publishing them and direct our efforts toward something else!

And we're not alone in our belief. For example: Dr. David Abrahamson, eminent criminologist, in his book, "Who Are The Guilty?" says, "Comic books do not lead to crime, although they have been widely blamed for it . . . In my experience as a psychiatrist, I cannot remember having seen one boy or girl who has committed a crime, or who became neurotic or psychotic . . . because he or she read comic books." A group led by Dr. Freds Kefauver, Menard Health Chairman of the 81st Congress of the P. T. A., decided that living room violence has "a decided beneficial effect on young minds." Dr. Robert M. Felix, director of the National Institute of Mental Health, said that horror comic books do not originate criminal behavior in children . . . in a way, the horror comics may do some good . . . children may use fantasy, as stimulated by the "comics" as a means of working out natural feelings of aggression.

We also believe that a large portion of our total readership of horror and crime comics is made up of adults. We believe that those who oppose comics are a small minority. Yet this minority is causing the hysteria. The voice of the majority . . . you who buy comics, read them, enjoy them, and are not harmed by them . . . has not been heard!

**WHAT YOU MUST DO:** Unless you act now, the pressure from this minority may force comics from the American scene. It is members of this minority who threaten the local retailers, who threaten the local wholesalers, who have sent letters to the Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency (now investigating the comic industry).

**IT IS TIME THAT THE MAJORITY'S VOICE BE HEARD!**

It is time that the Senate Subcommittee hears from YOU . . . each and every one of you!

If you agree that comics are harmless entertainment, write a letter to a postcard **TODAY!** to:

The Senate Subcommittee on Juvenile Delinquency  
United States Senate  
Washington 25, D. C.

and in your own words, tell them to: **Make it a new, polite letter!** In the case of you younger readers, it would be more effective if you could get your parents to write for you, or perhaps add a P.S. to your letter, as the Senate Subcommittee may not have much respect for the opinions of minors.

Of course, if you or your parents *disagree* with us, and believe that comics **ARE** bad, let your sentiments be known on that too! The important thing is that the Subcommittee hear from actual comic book readers and/or their parents, rather than from people who never read a comic magazine in their lives, but simply want to destroy them.

It is also important that your local newsdealer be encouraged to continue carrying, displaying, and selling all kinds of comics. Speak to him. Have him speak to his wholesaler.

Wherever you can, let your voice and the voices of your parents be heard in protest over the campaign against comics.

But first . . . right now . . . please write that letter to the Senate Subcommittee.

Sincerely,  
Your grateful editors  
(for the whole E. C. Gang)

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## SQUEEZE PLAY

From the place where he crouched on the metal ladder leading down into the open manhole, Ben Flint's eyes were exactly level with the surface of the street. Gripping the steel rails, Flint leaned forward to scan the paving crew hard at work nearby, spreading hot tar over the road bed. *He'll be here in a minute*, Flint thought to himself, his stomach muscles tightening with nervous expectation. *As soon as the lousy rat rolls up I'm gonna let 'im have it right between the eyes!*

Steam boiled up from the hot tar, while the workmen spread it swiftly . . . Flint's eyes narrowed to keep the top of the steep road in sight. A rumbling noise was heard off in the distance: Flint's right hand tightened spasmodically on the gun held at his side. *That must be the steamroller coming down the hill*, Flint mused, his pulse quickening. *Soon as these guys get outa the way and the roller comes this way, Fletcher is a dead man!*

At the top of the hill, now, the bulky metal monster came into view, its ponderous roller squashing flat the bubbling hot tar in its path. With gathering speed it moved down the hill, while the workers scrambled out of its path. Flint's gun-arm moved nervously across his face, to clear his vision, while he clung to the guard rail with his other hand . . . his eyes narrowed as he peered closely at the man perched on the seat of the steamroller. The red hair and the square-jawed face of the driver were fully in view . . . it was *Fletcher*, all right!

The huge steamroller was thirty yards

from him . . . the street workers had moved out of sight, back to the boiling tar cauldron. Flint raised his head slightly, the gun slid upward so that its sight was trained squarely on the driver of the immense juggernaut. Flint slowly counted to three, then he squeezed the trigger.

There was no sound; the silencer had done its work. Thirty yards away the body of the driver slumped forward, the man's head sagging listlessly on his shoulders. Flint started to descend back into the open manhole, his lips apart in a grimace of triumph. He heard, suddenly, the sound of sewer workers below . . . there were other men down there, coming closer! Men who might testify that he had been attempting to flee from the scene of a murder!

With a gasp of surprise, aware that his plan of escape had been thwarted, Flint leaped up the remaining steps and landed on the hot oozy street surface. Trying desperately to move his feet through the clinging tar, Flint turned and saw the enormous steamroller hurtling towards him.

He screamed just once, then the awful weight of the roller was crashing over his body . . . mashing him into a hideous blob of tortured, squirming, tar-covered flesh. His blood sprayed out like soup from a punctured can; Flint was shattered beyond recognition by the time the driverless roller had crashed into a stone wall at the bottom of the hill, and came to a stop amidst the mournful wail of steam escaping from the mangled boiler.



HERE'S A CRAZY, MIXED-UP  
FRIGHTMARE I CALL . . .

# MURDER DREAM

I WANDERED ABOUT THE LONELY  
LONDON STREETS TONIGHT, CHILLED  
TO THE MARROW OF MY BONES BY  
THE DENSE, DARK, CROAKING FOG. . .



I WAS MORE TIRED THAN I'D  
EVER BEEN IN MY LIFE, YET  
I *FEARED SLEEP*. I  
*FEARED THE DREAM!*  
SOMEWHERE IN THE VAST,  
GREY, MISTY SHROUD, HIS BEN  
TOLLED MIDNIGHT. . .



AT LAST... TOO EX-  
HAUSTED TO STAND...  
MY EYES SWARTING...  
BEGGING FOR REST...  
I RETURNED TO MY  
BLEAR HOTEL ROOM.



... UNWISSED,  
LEAVING MY CLOTHES  
WHERE THEY FELL...



... AND SPRAWLED UPON THE  
BED. . .



SLEEP CAME AT ONCE... AND THEN THE  
DREAM... THE DREAD DREAM I'VE HAD  
FOR THE PAST THREE NIGHTS COMES  
AGAIN... AND I AM POWERLESS TO STOP  
IT. . .



I AM APPROACHING OUR COTTAGE...  
BAGS IN HAND. I AM RETURNING  
FROM LONDON, MY ALTIMA PARKED OFF  
THE ROAD. IT'S ALL SO CLEAR.  
THE SOUND IS SO CLEAR. THE  
SOUND OF GATHY SCREAM-  
ING. . .



I HEAR IT SO CLEARLY... CATHY'S DESPERED HEART-RENDING SCREAM. I'M RUNNING NOW... REACHING OUT TOWARD THE DOOR. I'M CLOSER TO IT THAN I HAVE BEEN IN THE PAST TWO NIGHTS...

I'M COMING, CATHY!



*But I CAN'T REACH IT!* I GRASP WITH NERVING HANDS ON MY LIPS, MY BEDCLOTHES DRENCHED WITH COLD SWEAT... I BURN MY NAILS IN MY HANDS, SCREAMING ALONE...

CATHY! WHAT IS IT CATHY? WHY AM I DREAMING THIS? WHAT DOES IT MEAN?



I TRY TO DRIVE THE DREAM FROM MY MIND. I LIE BACK AND THINK OF THE COTTAGE AND THAT FIRST DAY CATHY LAID EYES UPON IT... STANDING SILENT AND STILL ON THAT CLEAR, WIND-SWEPT MOOR SOME EIGHTY MILES NORTH OF LONDON...

OH, HOWARD! IT'S JUST WHAT I'VE ALWAYS WANTED!

IT IS QUANT!



How I LOVED HER, MY CATHY! NOW I LOVE HER STILL! I REMEMBER THE SMOOKING ON THE COTTAGE DOOR... THE SQUEAK OF CHAIRSPRINGS INSIDE... THE SLOW PAD OF BOOTS ON CARPETED FLOOR... THE SHABBLBY DRESSED MAN PEERING OUT... HIS STARING EYES...

WE SAW THE "FOR SALE" SIGN, MAY WE LOOK AT THE PLACE? MY NAME'S HOWARD LEIGHTON! THIS IS MY WIFE CATHY!



IT WAS A COZY HOUSE, EVIDENTLY NEGLECTED, BUT CATHY WAS ENTHRALLED WITH IT...

IT'S CHARMING, HOWARD... YOU JUST WAIT TILL I PUT MY OWN LITTLE TOUCHES ABOUT!

I DON'T SUPPOSE THERE'LL BE ANY POINT TRYING TO DISSUADE YOU, HOWARD, SO NOW THE QUESTION IS, CAN WE AFFORD IT...



I REMEMBER HIS EYES BORING INTO MINE AS WE DISCUSSED PRICE...

SEVEN HUNDRED QUID THE FURNITURE GOES WITH THE HOUSE, CLAUDE BAYNES. I GO WITH THE HOUSE, TOO.

OH, THEN YOU MUST BE THE CARE-TAKER, I'M NOT AT ALL SURE I CAN AFFORD YOU, QUIDNES!



ONLY EIGHT BOB A WEEK... FOR TOBACCO, MISTER. I SLEEP OVER THE STABLE!

I DON'T KNOW.

THAT'S LITTLE ENOUGH, HOWARD, AND I WON'T HAVE TO BE HERE ALONE WHEN YOU GO TO LONDON ON BUSINESS.



EVEN AS MY THOUGHTS PAMBLE ON THROUGH THESE MEMORIES, DARKNESS SWAYE WAY TO DAWN. AND SO I RISE, TOO WORN AND HAGGARD TO TEND TO THE BUSINESS THAT BROUGHT ME TO LONDON. . .



GATHY LOOKED SO BEAUTIFUL, SO HAPPY, AS SHE WAVED GOODBYE FROM THE GARDEN. I FELT I LOVED HER MORE AND MORE WITH EACH PASSING DAY. . .



THE SCREAM ECHOES OVER THE GRIM GREY MOOR—ABANDONED... UNLOADING. MY POOR, TERRIFIED SCREAMING GATHY. LORD, HOW I LOVE HER. WITH SUPER-HUMAN EFFORT I HURL MYSELF AGAINST THE DOOR... TWIST THE KNOB... HEAVE MY WEIGHT AGAINST IT. . .



THE DAY PASSES TOO QUICKLY AND IT IS NIGHT ONCE MORE. I AM IN BED AGAIN WAITING... WAITING FOR SLEEP TO COME AND THAT **AWFUL, AWFUL DREAM**. . .



AWAKENESS GIVES WAY TO SLEEP. MEMORY DRIFTS INTO DREAM. . . THAT HORRIBLE DREAM AGAIN. I HEAR HER SCREAMING... GATHY'S SCREAMING FROM THE COTTAGE. I'M THERE AGAIN... RACING TOWARD THE DOOR... CLOSER NOW... CLOSER... YET NEVER SEEM-TO BE ABLE TO REACH IT. . .



FOR AN INTERMINABLE MOMENT, I AM TORTURED... FRUSTRATED... UNABLE TO BRING MY DREAM-VISION BEYOND THAT POINT. TIME AND MOTION ARE SUSPENDED. I'M BETWEEN WAKEFULNESS AND SLEEP. **I MUST KNOW!** I FLING WIDE THE DOOR... AND BEHOLD A SIGHT MORE HORRIBLE THAN I'VE EVER IN MY WILDEST NIGHTMARES, IMAGINED. . .



GATHY **DOES** SO WONDERS WITH THE PLACE, FIXING IT UP. HER HANDS WORKED **AMAZING** ON THE DECORATING... THE FLOWER GARDEN. THEN, ONE DAY, THE **LETTER** CAME. . .



THE BOREAM PAGES. THE DREAM VANISHES. I AM AWAKE, SITTING BOLT-UPRIGHT, GLARING AT MY FACE, TRYING TO FORCE THE FINISH INTO MY MIND...



SUDDENLY I KNOW WHAT I MUST DO. THE DREAM IS AN OATH... A WARNING. I LEAP FROM BED, FUMBLE FOR THE LAMP SWITCH...



BUT MY HAND FALLS AWAY. I SLUMP BACK ONTO THE BED. I REACH FOR MY CIGARETTES IN THE DARKNESS... LIGHT ONE... DRAG DEEPLY... REFLECTING...



I LIE THERE UNTIL THE CIGARETTE BURNS DOWN AND I CRUSH IT OUT. I AM DETERMINED TO STAY AWAKE, BUT MY EYES ARE UNBEARABLY HEAVY. SLEEP REACHES OUT AND SMOTHERS ME IN ITS VELVET GRIP. THE BOREAM ERUPTS TO GREET ME...



I'M INSIDE THE COTTAGE NOW... DASHING FORWARD... CATHY ON HER KNEES... HER FACE DISTORTED WITH FRIGHT... HER EYES GLAZED IN TERROR... PLEADING WITH ME TO SAVE HER, AND BRYMES, HIS CLAWS IN HER HAIR, THAT MANIACAL LOOK IN HIS EYES, HE STANDING OVER HER, AN AX POISED...



HE SEES ME THEN, AND LETS CATHY GO. I DIVE AT HIM, GRABBING FOR THE AX...



... BUT HIS WOMAN'S STRENGTH SENDS ME SPINNING ACROSS THE ROOM...



THEN HE COMES AT ME, THE AX HOLD HIGH, HIGH...



FIVE TEETH ARE BARED, SWOOSHING WITH CAUTION. HIS WILD EYES GLEAM. HE MOUNTAINS BEING THE AC DOWN...



ASAM CATHY SREAMS... BUT THE TIME HER TERROR IS FOR ME...



THERE IS A SPLATTING EXPLOSIVE LIGHT. I AM ANKLE, A PUNCHING IN MY EARS. I SIT UP IN MY SWEAT-DRENCHED BED, SHYERING...



I LIE BACK, STARING AT THE CEILING. OBLIVION CREEPS IN ONCE MORE... BLACKNESS... AND THE DREAM. I *MUST FIND OUT*... I MUST KNOW THE MEANING OF THIS AWFUL DREAM. THE WILD SALSIDSCOPE BEGINS... THE SCREAM... RACING TO THE COTTAGE DOOR... FLINGING IT WIDE...



... CATHY ON HER KNEES... BRYMES WITH THE AR... BURNING EYES... SALTER DRIPPING FROM HIS LIFE... COMING AT ME...



...CATHY'S SCREAM... THE AR FLASHING... BRYMES... HONARD... BLINDING WHITE... RED... BLACK...



THE SCREAM FABLE. LIGHT CREEPS IN. I SEE A COFFIN... CATHY SITTING ON THE FLOOR *BENEATH* IT... SCREAMING... SCREAMING. I CAN HEAR HER SCREAMING AND I AM THERE, TRYING TO PEER INTO THE COFFIN... TRYING TO *SEE*... TRYING TO SEE WHO'S IN IT...



THEN, SUDDENLY, I AM AWAKE AGAIN. FRANTICALLY, I DRESS... PAGE... CHIEF OUT OF THE HOTEL... AND SOON THE MILES ARE FLYING BY BENEATH THE WHEELS OF MY AUTOMOBILE.

I'VE GOT TO SEE... I'VE GOT TO SEE MY CATHY... MAKE SURE SHE'S ALL RIGHT!



THE SHADOWS OF DARK DESCEND SILENTLY FROM THE GREY SKY, MEET NEAR THE DARK, BLACK BOO BY FISING WHISPS OF MIST. THE FOG FLOATS LOW AND WHIRLWIND ABOUT THE COTTAGE AS I QUIT THE CAR AND PUSH IN. CATHY IS THERE... AND JUST AS IN MY DREAM... SHE SITS BESIDE A COFFIN... SORROWING.



AND HOWARD LEIGHTON IS IN THE COFFIN.



I STAGGER TOWARD HER WITH FALTERING, JERKY STEPS. HER FACE IS PALE WITH TERROR. HER HUSBAND... CATHY'S HUSBAND LIES DEAD... AND I KNOW...



I KNOW THAT I HAVE DREAMED A MADMAN'S DREAM. I KNOW THAT I AM CLAUDE GRIMES, AND AS THE SCREAMING BEGINS AGAIN AND I HOLD CATHY'S HAIR IN MY STRONG CLAWING HAND, MY AX POISED, I KNOW... OH, LORD... THAT I CAN'T STOP MYSELF... THAT I'VE COME BACK TO THE COTTAGE TO MURDER CATHY LEIGHTON JUST AS I MURDERED HER HUSBAND.



YOU SEE, MADDIE, HOWARD LEIGHTON COULDN'T HAVE BEEN IN LONDON... BECAUSE CLAUDE GRIMES HAD ALREADY GIVEN HIM THE BURN-NESS! CLAUDE... DIDN'T THAT HE WAS... BUT THOSEBUT HE WAS HOWARD OF WISHFUL THINKING, YOU MIGHT SAY. THE MINUTE CLAUDE SAW CATHY, HE WENT OUT OF HIS MIND OVER HER. WELL, CLAUDE WANTS WITH HER FEAR-POT TO DRIVE YOU OUT OF YOUR MIND WITH ANOTHER OF HER FREAKING RECIPES, SO I'LL SAY "BYE" FOR THIS ISSUE OF MY MURDERED MURDER.



THE END



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE, HEE? NO, HORROR HOODLUMS! THIS IS YOUR SNIVEL CHEF READY WITH ANOTHER MESS OF MOLDY MORBIDITY FROM MY GRUDGY CAULDRON. IF YOU'LL JUST SLIDE IN ON THE BOOK... INTO THE HAUNT OF FEAR... THE OLD WITCH... YOUR HOSTESS IN HEAPING HELPFINES OF FOUL FARE... WILL WING UP G.K.'S BUCK MAG IN MY USUAL BORY-TELLING MANNER WITH A DELIGHTFUL DISH OF DELIRIUM DELVINGS CALLED...

## The Switch

THE COLO MORNING LIGHT PRESSED UP AGAINST THE FINE-PANELED GENT'S ARCHED WINDOWS, REFUSED ENTRANCE BY THE HEAVILY LINED EXPENSIVE DAMASK DRAPES. WITHIN, Huddled OoP IN A HEAVY LEATHER CHAIR THAT HIS Aged BODY HARDLY NARMED, WEALTHY CARLTON WEBSTER SLIGHTLY STIRRED HIMSELF. HIS WRINKLED FACE CREASED EVEN MORE WITH A PREPOSTEROUS SMILE AND HIS LYMPHATIC BLUE EYES HELD SOME COUSANT DREAM AS HE REACHED FOR THE BULLCORN BESIDE THE PRIVATE FIREPLACE...



BEFORE LONG, A SLEEPY-EYED BUTLER SHUFFLED INTO THE DEN...

"YOU NAME... WHY, MR. WEBSTER? FULTON! I'M HAVE YOU BEEN HERE ALL NIGHT? I'M IN LOVE! YOU'LL GET THE FLEA BITE!"



FULTON'S EYES OPENED WIDE AT THIS STARTLING NEWS, AND HE LIT A DESK-LAMP IN ORDER TO SEE HIS EMPLOYER'S FACE. PERHAPS IT WAS SOME KIND OF JOKE...



WAT L. NAT I BRING YOU SOME BRANDY, SIR?

OH I KNOW YOU'D THINK I'VE GONE MAD, FULTON. BUT IT'S PROVE I AM IN LOVE! MADLY IN LOVE! SHE'S PRING... BEAUTIFUL.

FOOND, SIR? FORGIVE ME IF I SPEAK OUT SIR, BUT ARE YOU SURE SHE'S INTERESTED IN YOU?



OH MY MONEY, YOU MEAN! LINDA HAS NO IDEA THAT I'M WEALTHY, FULTON. AND I'M NOT GOING TO TELL HER.

THE DECEITFUL MILLIONAIRE ROSE UNSTEADILY. HE PATTED HIS BUTLER'S SHOULDER...

DON'T WORRY, FULTON! I LOVE HER AND I WANT HER TO MARRY ME VERY MUCH. BUT ONLY IF SHE LOVES ME. NOT MY MONEY. I WANT GENUINE AFFECTION, NOT AN ACT.



THAT NIGHT CARLTON WEBSTER TOOK AN IMPROVING BOUQUET TO LINDA STEWART'S BEAT FLAT. HER BEAUTIFUL FACE BEAMED GRATEFULLY...



THEY'RE LOVELY, CARLTON.

NOT HALF SO LOVELY AS YOU, LINDA!

LINDA INVITED CARLTON TO SHARE THE SOFA WITH HER. HE LOOKED LOVINGLY INTO HER GREEN EYES, STUNNED HER SCARLET LIPS LONGER TO KISS THEM, HE HELD HER WARM HAND AND, WITHOUT INTENDING TO, BLURTED OUT...



MARRY ME, LINDA? I MAKE A LOT OF MONEY, BUT I COULD BE HAPPY! I'D MAKE YOU HAPPY!

CARLTON? I... I CAN'T...

THE OLD MAN'S FACE DARGED. HE PLEADED WITH LINDA...



WHY NOT, LINDA? WHY WON'T YOU MARRY ME? I LOVE YOU! COULDN'T YOU LOVE ME IN TIME?

YOU'RE... YOU'RE NOT WHAT I'M LOOKING FOR, CARLTON.

LINDA'S MIND RAGED. HOW COULD SHE HURD THIS KIND OLD MAN'S FEELINGS? HOW COULD SHE TELL HIM...



WHAT ARE YOU LOOKING FOR, LINDA? WHY CAN'T I BE WHAT YOU'RE LOOKING FOR?

I... I... IT'S YOUR FACE, CARLTON, SO OLD... SO WITHERED... SO WRINKLED.

FOR A WHILE, CARLTON SAT IN STONY SILENCE, BROODING...GLUMLY REFLECTING ON NATURE'S CRUELTY. AT LAST HE BROKE, PUT ON HIS COAT AND HAT, AND...



CARLTON, I DIDN'T MEAN TO HURT YOU...

EVERYTHING WILL WORK OUT IN TIME, LINDA. DEAR, YOU'LL SEE YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU WANT!

THE IMAGINATION THAT HAD EARNED CARLTON WEBSTER A MILLION DOLLARS HAD NOT DESERTED HIM AFTER ALL THOSE YEARS. AS HE RODE HIS CHAUFFEUR-DRIVEN CADILLAC BACK TO HIS PALATIAL ESTATE, HE PUFFED THOUGHTFULLY ON A DOLLAR CIGAR AND SAW VISIONS IN ITS LUXURIANT BLUE SMOKE.



SOMETHING CAN BE DONE... THEY DO WONDERS WITH PLASTIC SURGERY THESE DAYS. I'LL HAVE A TALK WITH DOCTOR HURLEY IN THE MORNING...

THE NEXT DAY, CARLTON STOPPED IN AT HIS HIGH-PRICED PHYSICIAN'S OFFICE.



THERE ARE SHOTS I COULD GIVE YOU, MR. WEBSTER... HORMONES... BUT AT FOUR ADVANCED AGE

YOU'VE GOT IT WORSE, DOCTOR. IT'S MY FACE I WANT FIXED UP. I WANT YOUTH, DOCTOR!

THE MILLIONAIRE EXPLAINED HIS PRESENT CONCERN. DR. HURLEY SAT WITH HIS FINGERTIPS TOUCHING AND ASSUMED HIS GRANDEST PROFESSIONAL EXPRESSION...



THERE'S A CERTAIN DR. FAULKNER... -JOK, I'M NOT RECOMMENDING HIM, MIND YOU. IN FACT, ETHICS PREVENT ME FROM SAYING WHAT I THINK OF THE MAN'S METHODS. FANTASTIC

BLAST IT, HURLEY, DON'T START MAKING SPEECHES. GIVE ME HIS ADDRESS...

WITH SOME DIFFICULTY, CARLTON LOCATED THE CURIOUS STONE HOUSE OF DR. HANS FAULKNER, A THICK-SET NERVOUS LITTLE MAN WITH PRISM-LINED GLASSES SPUNDED THE HEAVY DOOR AND PEERED OUT



WEBSTER? THE NAME MEANS NOTHING, WHO SENT YOU? WHAT DO YOU WANT?

I NEED YOUR SERVICES, DOCTOR. I CAN AFFORD WHATEVER PRICE YOU ASK.

THE HINT OF WEALTH SEEMED TO SATISFY THE STRANGE PHYSICIAN. HE LED HIS VISITOR INTO AN UNLIT, NOT TO SAY UNSTEADY CELLAR LABORATORY. HE LISTENED TO CARLTON'S REQUEST...



I'VE PERFORMED THE OPERATION BEFORE, HERE WEBSTER... IN GERMANY, IN THIS COUNTRY, NOBODY WILL BELIEVE. I'M A QUACK THEY SAY. IT WOULD COST YOU TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS, AT LEAST!

THE ASTRONOMICAL FIGURE STAGGERED CARLTON. HE SAT MOPPING HIS SWEAT AS DOCTOR FAULKNER EXPLAINED.

"I TAKE ONLY FIFTY-THOUSAND FOR THE OPERATION, MR. WEBSTER. THE OTHER ONE HUNDRED AND FIFTY THOUSAND IS WHAT IT WILL COST FOR THE YOUNG MAN!"

YOUNG MAN? WHAT YOUNG MAN?

IF YOU WANT A COMPLETE NEW FACE, YOU'LL HAVE TO GET IT FROM A HANDSOME YOUNG MAN, NO? NOW, DON'T LOOK AT ME LIKE I'M INSANE. I HAVE DONE THIS OPERATION BEFORE! NOW, THE YOUNG MAN I HAVE IN MIND WILL DO ANYTHING FOR MONEY... A LOT OF MONEY!

THAT NIGHT, CARLTON VISITED LINDA ONCE MORE, THEN CAME AWAY REASSURED THAT SHE WAS WELL WORTH THE FABULOUS EXPENDITURE. THEN, HE VISITED THE YOUNG MAN DR. FAULKNER HAD RECOMMENDED...

DR. FAULKNER SAID YOU'D GO ANYTHING FOR MONEY, MR. BOOTH!

HE OUGHT TO KNOW! I DO PLenty FOR NOW. WHAT'S THE DEAL?

GEORGE BOOTH, THE YOUNG MAN, SAT IN SILENCE FOR A FULL MINUTE AFTER THE OLD MAN HAD GIVEN HIM THE DETAILS...

A HUNDRED AND FIFTY GRAND! AND ALL I HAVE TO DO IS GIVE UP THIS BUNCH OF MINK? WHAT'S IT GOTTA ME ANYWAY? I'VE ALWAYS HAD TO SCRAPE FOR A BUCK! DR. WEBSTER, IT'S A DEAL!

SPLENDID! SPLENDID!

THE NEXT DAY, THE OLD MILLIONAIRE AND THE YOUNG MAN WENT TO DOCTOR FAULKNER'S CELLAR LABORATORY. EVERYTHING WAS IN READINESS... TWO OPERATING TABLES... MUCH MEDICAL EQUIPMENT... AND THE NECESSARY CERTIFIED CHECKS...

HERE YOU ARE, GENTLEMEN! YOUR MONEY... IN ADVANCE!

WHAT ABOUT MY BURNING ODDS? I DON'T LOSE THAT, DO I?

NO! YOU KEEP YOUR BRAIN, GEORGE. I ONLY SWITCH THE SKULL BONE AND FLESH COVERING...

TWO WEEKS LATER, DR. FAULKNER UNVEILED CARLTON WEBSTER'S NEW FACE...

THE OPERATION IS A COMPLETE SUCCESS! HERE! LOCK

WONDERFUL! YOU'RE A GENIUS, DOCTOR! WAIT TILL LINDA SEES ME NOW!

DR. FAULKNER SMILED ONLY...

OH, BY THE WAY, I TOLD GEORGE BOOTH TO LET ME KNOW IF HE MOVES. WE SHOULD HAVE HIS NEW ADDRESS IN CASE WE... ER... MIGHT NEED HIM AGAIN... EN?

SOON, CARLTON RUSHED TO LINDA'S APARTMENT...

IS IT **REALLY** YOU, CARLTON? I JUST CAN'T **BELIEVE** IT. BUT **NOW** COULD YOU AFFORD SUCH AN **EXPENSIVE PLASTIC SURGERY JOB?**

THE DOCTOR IS A FRIEND, LINDA. **NOW** WILL YOU **MARRY ME?**



I... I CAN'T, CARLTON. YOU'RE STILL NOT WHAT I WANT! I... I... IT'S YOUR **BODY**, CARLTON... SO **BEST**... SO **DECEPT** AND **OLD** AND **SOFT**. FORGIVE ME FOR **SAYING** SO, BUT... IT WOULD **DISGUST** ME!

LINDA!



CARLTON TURNED TO GO... FRUSTRATED...

I'M SORRY, CARLTON! YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU WANT, LINDA! YOU'LL **SEE!**



AND SO, AGAIN, CARLTON WEBSTER WENT TO SEE DR. FRASHER...

OF COURSE I CAN GIVE YOU A NEW TORSO, MR. WEBSTER. BUT IT WILL COST YOU **SIX HUNDRED THOUSAND DOLLARS**!

WHAT! YOU'RE **MAD!** I CAN'T AFFORD THAT!



YOU CAN'T EXPECT GEORGE BOSTH TO GIVE UP HIS BODY FOR **LESS** THAN **HALF** A **MILLION**, MR. WEBSTER.

ALL RIGHT! CALL HIM! SEE IF HE'LL **DO IT!**



AND SO, AGAIN, THE CELLAR LABORATORY WAS READED. CARLTON WAS THERE WITH TWO CERTIFIED CHECKS.

THESE TWO OPERATIONS WILL HAVE **WIPED OUT MOST OF MY FORTUNE**, GENTLEMEN, BUT IT'S **WORTH IT!** HERE YOU ARE...

READY, GEORGE...

LET'S SET IT **OVER WITH A DOG!** I GOT **PLANS** FOR THIS **BOUGH!**



AND AGAIN, THE OPERATION WAS A SUCCESS. AFTER A MONTH OF CONVALESCENCE...

WATCH MY **STOMACH MUSCLES** RIFFLE, DOCTOR. I'M **BOLDED** AS A **ROCK** NOW. LINDA **CAN'T** **REFUSE** ME...

JAY, MR. WEBSTER, BUT IF YOU **NEED** ME... OR **GEORGE**... WE'LL BE **WAITING!**



THAT AFTERNOON, CARLTON TOOK LINDA TO THE BEACH TO SHOW OFF HIS STRONG MUSCULAR BODY...

LINDA LEANED TOWARDS CARLTON, HER MOST LIPS INVITING...

LINDA SHUDDERED AS CARLTON HELD HER...

I CAN'T GET OVER IT, CARLTON. HOW IS IT POSSIBLE TO GET IN SUCH WONDERFUL SHAPE IN SUCH A SHORT TIME? THAT DOCTOR FRIEND OF YOURS...

THAT'S MY SECRET, LINDA. SO YOU LIKE THE WAY I LOOK NOW.

YOU LOOK FINE TO ME, CARLTON. FINE.

OH, DARLING...

NO, CARLTON! PLEASE DON'T! YOU'RE NOT WHAT I WANT!

LINDA? MARRY ME!

NO, CARLTON! NOT I CAN'T! I WON'T! IT'S... IT'S JUST LOOK AT THOSE BRAWNY ARMS... AN OLD MAN'S ARMS... AND YOUR LEGS... SPINDLY. KNOFF... FULL OF VARIKOSE VEINS

LINDA? FOR GOD'S SAKE!

CARLTON'S HANDSOME FACE BECAME PALE. HIS THICK BRAWNY CHEST HEAVED WITH ANGRY BREATHING...

WHAT DO YOU WANT IN A MAN, LINDA? WILL NO FANCY SATISFY YOU?

I KNOW WHAT I WANT, CARLTON. I KNOW! YOU'RE... YOU'RE JUST NOT IT!

CARLTON STOOD UP, STUFFING HIS SLENDER ARMS WITH THEIR BABONIS BRILLIANT VIOLET OLD MAN'S LEGS...

YOU'LL GET WHAT YOU WANT, LINDA? I PROMISE.

I HOPE SO, CARLTON! I HOPE SO.

CARLTON LOOKED AT LINDA IN ALL HER BEAUTY AND HE LONGED FOR HER, HIS YOUTHFUL BODY BURNING WITH DESIRE. AND SO, LATER...

ARMS AND LEGS, OH, MR. WESTERN BEARDE WILL WANT TWO HUNDRED THOUSAND

IT'S EVERY CENT I HAVE LEFT! I'LL BE BANKRUPT! BUT FOR LINDA... IT'S WORTH IT!

RECOVERY WAS SWIFTER THIS TIME—TWO WEEKS. AS CARLTON DRESSED TO LEAVE THE SANITARIUM THAT FINAL DAY, HE SMILED EARLY.



I'M A POOR MAN NOW, DR. FALKNER?

POOR, YES... BUT PERFECT! SUCH ARMS! SUCH LEGS... SUCH A BODY, YOU ARE AN ADONIS NOW.

SMILE'S HAPPINESS SPREAD OVER CARLTON'S FACE. HE CLASPED THE DOCTOR'S HAND.



YES! THE MONEY BROUGHT ME NO HAPPINESS. NOW I'M YOUNG... STRONG... HANDSOME! I'M WHAT LINDA WANTED NOW.

GO TO YOUR LOVELY YOUNG WOMAN, HERE. WEEBIE! GOOD-BYE... AND GOOD LUCK!

CARLTON FAIRLY FLEW TO LINDA'S APARTMENT.



LINDA... I WHERE'S LINDA STEWART?

MOVED UPTOWN. HERE'S HER NEW ADDRESS!

CARLTON RUSHED UPTOWN. LINDA'S NEW APARTMENT HOUSE WAS ONE OF THOSE LUXURIOUS NEW ONES. HE HAMMERED ON HER PENTHOUSE DOOR.



CARLTON?

LOOK, LINDA! I'M A COMPLETELY NEW MAN! IN THE WAY YOU WANTED ME! YOU'VE GOT TO MARRY ME NOW!

LINDA LAUGHED...

I NEVER WANTED YOU, CARLTON... EITHER WAY. YOUNG OR OLD! BUT I COULDN'T TELL YOU THE TRUTH! AND I CAN'T MARRY YOU! I AM MARRIED.

YOU'RE... MARRIED? BUT... DR. NO!



THE OLD MAN ODDERED INTO THE SWANK LIVING ROOM... WITH CARLTON'S ARMS AND CARLTON'S LEGS AND CARLTON'S HEAD AND CARLTON'S BODY.



THAT'S WHAT I WANTED, CARLTON! A MILLIONAIRE TO MARRY! I TRIED TO DISCOURAGE YOU... BECAUSE I KNEW YOU WERE POOR! LAST WEEK I FOUND MY MILLIONAIRE! THIS IS BESSIE BOOTH... MY HUSBAND.

GOOD LORD!

HEE-HEE! NOW THERE'S A SWITCH, EH, BIGGER! A COMPLETE SWITCH! LINDA ENDED UP MARRYING EVERYTHING CARLTON HAD IN THE VERY BEGINNING. HE COULDN'T SAVED HIMSELF THE TROUBLE, OH, WELL... THAT'S WHAT HAPPENS WHEN YOU GO TO PIECES OVER A GAME. WE'LL ALL SEE YOU NEXT IN THE VAULT OF HORROR WITH MORE BLOOD-SUCKLING FIGHTS. TILL THEN, THIS IS THE OLD HYPO, REMINDING YOU TO SAVE YOUR SKIN FOR A BAIT BAIT! IT'S EASIER TO DIE IN BED! WHI!



# CAR BURNING OIL?

## Engineer's Discovery Stops it Quickly

### Without A Cent For Mechanical Repairs!

If your car is using too much oil—if it is sluggish, hard to start, slow on pickup, lacks pep and power—you are paying good money for oil that's burning up in your engine instead of providing lubrication. Why? Because your engine is leaking. Freedom has won a gap between pistons and cylinder wall. Oil is pumping up into the combustion chamber, fouling your mixture with carbon. Gas is exploding down through this gap, going to waste.

#### SAVE \$50 TO \$150 REPAIR BILL



Before you spend \$50-\$150 to \$150-\$500 for an engine overhaul, read how you can fix that leaky engine yourself! In just a few minutes, without having a single new part, without even taking your engine down—it's almost as easy as squeezing toothpaste or shaving cream out of a tube, thanks to the discovery of a new synthetic substance called Power Seal. This revolutionary, new compound combines

the lubricating qualities of Moly, the "greasy" wonder metal, with the heat-sealing properties of Vitreolene, the magical product whose particles expand under heat. (Tip to all those engine fanatics.)

Just squeeze Power-Seal out of the tube into your motor's cylinders through the quick plug openings. It will spread over pistons, piston rings and cylinder walls as your engine runs and it will PLATE every surface with a smooth, shiny, metallic film that won't come off! No amount of pressure can scrape it off. No amount of heat can break it down. It fills the cracks, scratches and scoring caused by engine wear. It closes the gap between worn piston rings and cylinders, with an automatic self-expanding seal that stops oil pumping, stops gas blow-by and restores compression. No more piston slapping, no more engine knocking. You get more power, speed, mileage.

This greasy, platey, self-lubricating too for Moly, the greasy metal lubricant, reduces friction to nothing else can! It is the only lubricant indestructible enough to be used in U. S. winter energy plants and jet engines. It never dries down, never leaves your engine dry. Even after your car has been standing for weeks, even in coldest weather, you can start it as a fresh because the lubrication is in the metal itself! That's why you'll add amazingly little oil if you'll get hundreds even thousands of more miles per quan-

#### TRY IT FREE!

You don't risk a penny. Prove to yourself that Power-Seal will make your car run like new. Put it in your engine on 30 days Free Trial. If you're not getting better performance out of your car than you thought possible—if you have not stopped oil burning and have not increased gas mileage—return the empty tube and get your money back in full.

Power-Seal is absolutely harmless, a wonder that the finest car in any way. It not only preserves and protects your motor.



#### POWER SEAL MAKES WORN OUT LAST ENGINE RUN LIKE NEW

Here are the Two Engineer's mounted gauges showing the phenomenal increase in compression obtained in a 1960 De Soto car that had run for 150,000 miles. Now the POWER SEAL compound restored pep and power, reduced gas consumption, cut oil burning nearly 100%.

	Cyl. 1	Cyl. 2	Cyl. 3	Cyl. 4	Cyl. 5	Cyl. 6
BEFORE	70 lbs.	70 lbs.	102 lbs.	70 lbs.	80 lbs.	100 lbs.
AFTER	112 lbs.	112 lbs.	112 lbs.	112 lbs.	112 lbs.	112 lbs.

#### BEST INVESTMENT WE EVER MADE, SAYS DRIVER-OWNER

"We simply ordered the POWER SEAL kit instructions and made an extra repair or adjustment. Compression readings were taken before and after and showed a big improvement in both cars. As a result the engine seemed a lot more pick-up and power which was especially noticeable on hills. When compared on time and the sharp reduction in oil consumption. In one city we've actually been saving a quart a day and figure we have saved \$11.25 in oil alone since the POWER SEAL was applied a month ago. In the other city, oil consumption was cut practically in half. We have also been getting better gas mileage. All in all, POWER SEAL, turned out to be just about the best investment we ever made. It paid for itself in a week and has been saving money for us ever since. As my problem of pumping the fuel oil pump, obviously this would have cost me real money." — J. H. Tait, Birmingham, N. Y.

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*Charles Atlas*

—actual photo of the man who holds the title, "The World's Most Perfectly Developed Man"

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☐ If under 16 years of age check here for Booklet A.

TALES  
FROM THE  
CRYPT

THE  
MURDERERS



THE  
MURDERERS



THE  
MURDERERS



THE  
MURDERERS



# THE CRYPT OF TERROR

HEY, HEY! WELCOME, YOU DEAR LITTLE MONRO MONSTERS, TO MY NEW TERROR-TITLE! E.C.'S BRUESOME THREESOME IS NOW A REVOLTING FOURSOME, AS "THE CRYPT OF TERROR" JOINS WITH "THE VAULT OF HORROR," "THE HAUNT OF FEAR," AND "TALES FROM THE CRYPT" TO BRING YOU HEAPING HELPFULS OF HORROR IN THE GIFT-IMITATED E.C. TRADITION. I TRUST YOU'LL BE AMPLY SICKENED BY THIS LATEST COLLECTION OF GADGETEROUS GAYOTIMOS, AS IF NOW, ALL IS AT PEACE AT THE E.C. OFFICES, BUT I EXPECT TROUBLE WITH THE VAULT-KEEPER AND THE OLD WITCH REALIZES THAT I NOW HAVE TWO MUCH-BAD TO THEIR ONE! OH, WELL, THERE'S NO USE SLAUGHTERING YOUR CHILDREN BEFORE YOU COME TO THE BURNED BRIDGES. SO, COME INTO THE CRYPT OF TERROR... AND YOUR MOST IN HORROR AND HEAVEN. YOUR CRYPT-KEEPER WILL LAUNCH MY NEW HAUSEATING NEWSPRINT-MAGAZINE WITH THE BLOOD-CURLING, SPINE-TINGLING YELP-FARN' I CALL.

## UPON REFLECTION



CHESTER WAYNE TRUCKED TREMBOLUSLY ALONG THE BACKROAD ROAD LEADING FROM PLAINSVILLE. HIS HAND-POWERED RIFLE WAS READY, HIS NERVOUS FINGER ON THE TRIGGER. ABOVE, A FULL MOON SHED A PALE LIGHT ON THE COUNTRYSIDE, SILHOUETTING EACH SHADY BUSH INTO AN OBNOXIOUS CROUCHING FORM. AROUND HIM, EACH FAINT WHISPER OF WIND BURNED "SO BACK! SO BACK!"...



I SPOKE OVER MAMIE'S BAKED BONES I'D GET THE ONE WHO DID IT TO HER. I'VE GOT TO KEEP TRYING! I'VE GOT TO!

THINKING OF MAMIE MADE CHESTER MAD AND DROVE HIM ON. HE WAS ROUNDING A TURN WHEN HE SAW IT NOT FORTY FEET AHEAD. HE STOPPED ABRUPTLY AND CALLED OUT TO THE BLACK-CLAD HILL IN THE SHALLOW ROAD-SIDE DITCH...



WHO, WHO'S THERE?

THE STARTLED CREATURE TURNED FROM ITS HUMAN PREY A CLAMMY SWEAT BROKE OUT ON CHESTER WHEN HE SAW THE HUNNY FACE, THE BLOOD DRIPPING FROM ITS LIPS AND CHIN...



BAH! OH, LORD...

THE WEREWOLF BARED ITS FANGS AT THE HUNTER AND SMARLED. CHESTER DROPPED TO ONE KNEE, THREW THE RIFLE TO HIS SHOULDER AND SQUEEZED THE TRIGGER. A HOLLOW-WOODED BOSS SHRIEKED ACROSS THE ROAD AFTER THE NOW-FLEEING BEAST!



HIT HIM! FOR MAMIE! RIP HIM OPEN!

HE WAS MUMB WITH HORROR, HALF-BLIND WITH RAGE AS HE BLASTED AWAY AT THE DISAPPEARING MONSTER TILL THE MAGAZINE WAS EMPTY AND THE HAMMER CLICKED DEAD ON THE EMPTY RIFLE CHAMBER.



MISSED HIM! SOB... MAMIE! I SOB... MISSED...

LOATH TO LOOK UPON THE SORT REMAINS THAT LAY IN THE DITCH, CHESTER WAS NEVERTHELESS DRAWN TOWARD THEM AS THOUGH BY SOME MAGNET OF MORBIDITY. HE APPROACHED ON TREMBLING LEGS... LOOKED... THEN RECOILED IN HORROR AT THE SIGHT OF BARE BONE AND RAW, HALF-EATEN FLESH...



OH SOB...

A GREAT VICIOUS SICKNESS WRENCHED AT CHESTER'S INNARDS... AND HE TURNED, RETCHING, AND RAN THE WHOLE WAY BACK TO PLAINSVILLE...



THE MEN IN HARLEY'S TAVERN LEAPED TO THEIR FEET AS CHESTER BURST THROUGH THE DOOR, HEADED FOR THE BAR. THEY SAW THE RIFLE AND THE LOOK ON HIS FACE AND THEY DREW.

WHO... WHO WAS THAT? QUICK, FRANK! POUR ME SOMETHIN' STRAIGHT!



CHESTER TOSSED OFF A DOUBLE BOURBON... AND WHILE IT WAS STILL BURNING DOWN, HE PANTED OUT THE TERRIBLE DETAILS OF HIS HARBORING EXPERIENCE...

GOD, MAN! TELL US WHO THAT WAS! IT WAS! WE'VE ALL GOT FAMILIES!



A FARMER HAD A PLACE THREE MILES OUT... BEEN HIM IN TOWN... NICE RIF. GUY. HE'S GONNA BE QUIET A LONG, LONG TIME NOW... LIKE MY MAMIE!

AT FIRST THE MEN EXCHANGED GUILTY GLANCES OF RELIEF, BUT AFTER A FEW MOMENTS OF BROODING SILENCE, PAUL MYERS CLIMBED ONTO A TABLE AND SHOUTED...

THAT MAKES FIVE VICTIMS IN AS MANY MONTHS... AND WHY? AIN'T WE PAYIN' FOR PROTECTION IN THIS ROTTEN TOWN? ALL WE GET FROM MAYOR HARBON IS PROMISES! DO WE WAIT TILL THAT WEREWOLF GRABS SOMEONE CLOSE TO US BEFORE WE MAKE HARBON DO SOMETHIN'?



IT'S ALREADY GOT SOMEONE CLOSE TO ME, PAUL! MY WIFE, MAMIE!



THAT OWES YOU MORE RIGHT TO TELL THE MAYOR OFF, CHEST. YOU'LL LEAD THE WAY AND WE'LL BACK YOU UP!

FIFTEEN MINUTES LATER, MAYOR HARBON WAS AWAKENED BY SHOUTS OF HIS NAME. HE LEANED UNNERSILY FROM THE BEDROOM WINDOW OF HIS COLONIAL HOME AND LOOKED DOWN AT THE ANGRY CROWD BELOW.

PLEASE, GENTLEMEN! THEN COME MY WIFE IS ASLEEP! ON DOWN, MAYOR!



SOON, HIS PORTLY PANAMA-CLAD FIGURE WHIPPED IN A SLAND ROSE, THE DISMAILED MAYOR OF PLAINSVILLE STOOD BEFORE HIS TOWN-PEOPLE, LISTENING TO THE FRIGHTFUL NEWS...

TERRIBLE! TERRIBLE! I'LL SEND OFFICIAL CONDOLENCES TO HIS WIDOW IN THE MORN...



A PRT LOT OF SODD THAT'LL DO, MAYOR? WHAT ABOUT THE PROTECTION YOU PROMISED US?



WHAT CAN I DO, MR. WAYNE? FOR ONE THING, THIS FIERCE ATTACK TOOK PLACE OUTSIDE OF TOWN... BEYOND MY JURISDICTION!

MY WIFE'S BODY WAS RANDED RIGHT HERE ON THE STREETS OF PLAINSVILLE!



WE WANT MORE THAN WORDS, MAYOR!

WHAT'RE YOU GONNA DO ABOUT IT, HARBON?

MAJOR HANSON TRIED TO PACIFY THE ROILING MOB...

PLEASE, GENTLE-  
MEN! NOW, MR.  
WAYNE, YOU SAY  
YOU FIRED SEVERAL  
SILVER BULLETS  
AT THE WEREWOLF.  
THEY WERE SILVER  
BULLETS, OF COURSE!

SENSE? I  
DON'T GET  
YOU, MAJOR.  
I USED NOU-  
LOW-ROUSE  
IT'S... LEAD.  
NOT SILVER.  
THEY'RE LIKE  
GUM-DUMS...

MAJOR HANSON WAS VERY ADEPT AT SHIFTING THE PRESSURE FROM HIMSELF...

WELL, I MIGHT HAVE KNOWN  
SOMEONE WOULD GO OFF HALF-  
COCKED AT MY DEAR MR. WAYNE...  
IF YOU TAKEN THE TROUBLE  
TO HEAD UP ON WEREWOLVES, AS  
I HAVE, YOU'D KNOW THAT ONLY  
A SILVER BULLET CAN KILL A  
WEREWOLF!

THE CROWD FELL SILENT WITH EMBARRASSMENT, FOR NO MAN WISHED TO ADMIT IGNORANCE TO HIS NEIGHBOR. MAJOR HANSON SMILED PATRONIZINGLY...

I'LL WELCOME ANYONE OF YOU  
TO MY LIBRARY WHO'D CARE TO  
INFORM HIMSELF ON THE HABITS  
OF THE LYCANTHROPE. MEAN-  
WHILE, MY FELLOW CITIZENS, BE  
CALM AND... GOOD-NIGHT...

THE MAJOR WENT BACK INTO HIS STately HOME, THE CROWD DISPERSED, AND CHESTER WAYNE JOINED PAUL MYERS AND CHUCK BOGGS IN A HILARIOUS SESSION AT MARLEY'S TAVERN...

THERE NEVER WAS A MAN BETTER AT  
BOURMING OUT OF A HOT SPOT THAN  
MAJOR HANSON!

WE'RE NO BETTER  
OFF THAN BEFORE  
WE CALLED ON HIM!

CHESTER WAYNE GRIMACED...

YES, WE ARE! WE HAVE TIME... A WHOLE  
MONTH BEFORE THE NEXT FULL MOON. WE  
CAN START MELTING DOWN SILVER COMBS  
FOR BULLETS! WE CAN BE READY THE  
NEXT TIME THAT WEREWOLF SHOWS HIMSELF...

SO MOST OF THE PEOPLE OF PLAINSVILLE LIVED IN DREAD OF THE COMING FULL MOON... AND THE NIGHT IT ARRIVED, EVERYONE STAYED BEHIND LOCKED DOORS AND SHUTTERED WINDOWS. ONLY CLARA HANSON, THE MAJOR'S WIFE, VENTURED OUT TO VISIT HER AGED AND AILING MOTHER...

I'VE GOT TO BE FUNKING ALONG, MAMA  
ELWOOD WILL BE WORRYING ABOUT  
ME! PROMISE YOU'LL TAKE IT EASY...

WHAT ELSE  
COULD I DO  
IN THIS  
WHEELOCKAR,  
CLARA?

IT WAS JUST THREE SHORT BLOCKS FROM HER MOTHER'S HOME TO THE HANSON HOME. CLARA WALKED UNFRAID, UNTIL SHE SAW THE FULL YELLOW MOON HANGING HIGH ABOVE THE VILLAGE SQUARE...

GULP... THANK HEAVENS IT'S  
NOT FART!

CLARA HANSON HURRIED HER STEPS, FINDING SOME LITTLE COMFORT AS THE GRIND CLIPPING OF HER HEELS ALONG THE CEMENTED SIDEWALK KEPT TIME WITH THE RAPID BEATING OF HER RACING HEART. SHE'D REACHED THE SQUARE, ONLY ONE BLOCK FROM HOME, WHEN SHE HEARD THE TERRIFYING THUD. SHE SPUN AROUND, HER BLOOD TURNING TO ICE IN HER VEINS...



HER ATTEMPTED SCREAM CAME FORTH AS NO MORE THAN AN ANATHEMATIC WHEELING SCOWAL, THE FLESH-STAINED BEAST SPRANG... DIPPING ITS BLEAMING FANGS INTO HER THROBBING THROAT... RIPPING IT OPEN... POUNTAINING THE BLOOD OVER ITS HAIRY FACE... INTO ITS RED BOILING EYES...



WHILE JUST ACROSS THE SQUARE, IN HARLEY'S TAVERN, CHESTER WATHE AND PAUL MYERS WERE FORTIFYING THEMSELVES AT THE BAR.



WE'RE READY FOR 'EM THIS TIME, FRANK! YEP! GOT SILVER BULLETS IN OUR RIFLES...

THAT'S RIGHT, FRANK!

HARVEY! GOT LOT OF GOOD YOU'RE DOIN' TALKIN' ABOUT IT HERE! IF YOU'RE GONNA AFTER 'EM, GOT IF YOU'RE SCARED, THEN ADMIT IT AND QUIT BULLIN'!

SHEEPISHLY, THEY KICKED UP THEIR SILVER-BULLET-LOADED CARBINES AND stalked FROM THE TAVERN, ACROSS THE SQUARE. THEY GOT NO FURTHER THAN WHERE THE SHATTERED SKELETON OF CLARA HANSON LAY IN A POOL OF COAGULATING BLOOD, HER BLOOD SOAKED CLOTHES STREWN ABOUT...



PAUL CHOKED...

WE'RE...WE'RE TOO LATE! EMMO! LET'S GET THE MAYOR! LET'S MAKE HIM SEE FOR HIMSELF!

MAYOR HANSON WAS PLAINLY TROUBLED WHEN HE FACED THE TWO WHITE-FACED MEN ACROSS HIS THRESHOLD...



...STUCK AGAIN?? OH... LORD! NO! NO! I JUST KNOWED MY MOTHER-IN-LAW! CLARA HANSON COME HOME YET I WAS IT A...A WOMAN?

PAUL! HEY! I'M THINKIN' THE SAME THING! YOU BETTER GET DRESSED, MAYOR!



THE MAYOR RECOGNIZED HIS WIFE'S CLOTHES AT ONCE. WITH MUCH LOUD BAILING AND ANGUISHED SOBBS, HE FELL ACROSS HER FLESH-STRIPPED BONES...

CLARA SOB... MY CLARA

ALL THAT CRYING WON'T HELP HER NOW...

LEAVE HIM ALONE, PAUL!



AT LAST THE MAYOR AROSE AND HIS TEAR-REDDENED EYES BLAZED

THAT FILTHY PILE THING! I'LL GET EVERY ABLE-BODIED MAN IN THIS TOWN AFTER IT!

THIS TIME IT'S YOUR WIFE, AND THE SHOE'S ON THE OTHER FOOT!

LAF OFF, WILL YOU, PAUL!



EVERY MAN WILL BE ARMED! THERE'LL BE SILVER BULLETS FOR ALL! A VIGILANTE COMMITTEE, THAT'S WHAT WE'LL HAVE! WE'LL DIVIDE INTO GROUPS... COME THE COUNTRYBOY! COME THE NEXT FULL MOON WE'LL BE WAITING!



WITHIN TWENTY-EIGHT DAYS, EVERY CAPABLE MAN IN PLAINS-VILLE HAD RECEIVED A RIFLE AND FIVE SILVER BULLETS. EVERYONE HAD PRACTICED WITH MOVING TARGETS. EVERYONE WAS READY. THE AFTERNOON BEFORE THE NIGHT OF THE FULL MOON THE MEN THROBLED BEFORE MAYOR HANSON'S MARCHION

WE'LL START NOW. IN GROUPS OF SIX... IN DAYLIGHT... SO WE CAN ADMIRAL OURSELVES WITH EACH AREA! NOW, REMEMBER



...STAY CLOSE TOGETHER AND MAKE SURE OF WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING AT! WHEN YOU SEE SOMETHING MOVE, MAKE CERTAIN IT ISN'T ONE OF YOUR OWN PARTY. FAR OFF! ONE MAN USE A LIGHT WHILE THE OTHER MAN DOES THE SHOOTING! WE DON'T WANT ANY INNOCENT PEOPLE KILLED!



IT WAS TWILIGHT WHEN MAYOR HANSON, WEARING A RED DUDE SHOOTING JACKET AND SCARLET HUNTER'S CAP, CLIMBED FROM HIS CAR AT THE REMEDIOUS SPOT FOR HIS GROUP. CHESTER WAYNE GRINNED...

WELL, THE FANCY GUYSET ON HIS HONOR, PAUL, YOU COULD SEE IT IN A COAL MINE AT MIDNIGHT.

HUNTING IN THE DARK IS A DANGEROUS BUSINESS, MR. WAYNE, I'D RATHER BE SAFE THAN SORRY.



WHEN DARKNESS CAME, THE MEN WERE ALERT AND ALERT! MATT STEVENS, WITH HIS GROUP IN TOWN, SAW A SUSPICIOUS FIGURE, SCREAMED OUT AFTER IT, AND BEGAN SHOOTING...

CUT THAT OUT, MATT! THE MAJOR SAID TO MAKE SURE WHAT YOU'RE SHOOTING AT!



LUCKILY, MATTHEW'S SHOTS WERE WILD. THE FIGURE TURNED OUT TO BE A FAMILIAR DRUNK THEY ALL KNEW WELL...

WELL, WHAT'S YOU RUN FOR IF YOU AREN'T THE WEREWOLF?

I AMN'T THE WEREWOLF! I'M SOBERED I'M GONNA BE A BITTIN' DRUNK WHEN SOMEONE OPEN UP ON ME NEXT MORNIN'!



MEANWHILE, MAYOR HANSON AND HIS PARTY'D SURROUNDED A STRANGE OLD WOMAN WALKING ALONG A LONELY DARK ROAD...

LADY, YOU'RE TAKING A CHANCE BEING OUT TONIGHT! BETTER LET US SEE YOU HOME!

I DON'T NEED THEE! I AMN'T SLEEPY!



PAUL MYERS STUDIED THE OLD LADY.

HOLD ON, MAYOR! WHO SAYS THE WEREWOLF'S GOT TO BE A MAN? I'VE SEEN THIS GUYER CAME AROUND I NEVER LINED HER LOOKS!

MAYBE YOU'VE GOT SOMETHING THERE, MYERS. I HADN'T THOUGHT OF A FEMALE WEREWOLF!



MAYOR HANSON AND PAUL MYERS REVEALED THEIR THE ONE TO THE OTHERS OF THEIR PARTY...

WELL, NOW CAN WE TELL IF SHE IS THE WEREWOLF?

WE'LL TAKE HER BACK TO MY PLACE! I HAVE THAT BOOK! IT TELLS HOW TO RECOGNIZE A WEREWOLF... EVEN IN HUMAN FORM!



CHET WAYNE BRANCHED HIS RIFLE AND SCOOPED...

IN, BUTS TO YOUR BOOK, MAYOR. IN LESS THAN TWENTY MINUTES, THE MOON WILL BE FULL. THEN, IF THE OLD LADY TURNS OUT TO BE WHAT WE'RE AFTER, WE LET HER HAVE IT!

...AND IF SHE DOESN'T, THEN WE'VE WASTED VALUABLE TIME... PERHAPS EVEN LET THE REAL WEREWOLF ESCAPE.



THEY MADE THEIR WAY BACK TO THE MAYOR'S CAR. THE OLD LADY POUNED THEM AS THEY TRIED TO PUSH HER IN. SHE EVEN BIT PAUL'S HAND...

OWIE! THE DIRTY BITCH!

I AMN'T DOWN! YOU CAN'T MAKE ME GO!



PAUL SOLVED THE PROBLEM. HE BRUNG HIS RIFLE - BUTT, CLOUTING THE OLD WOMAN ACROSS THE SIDE OF HER HEAD.

THIS... THIS IS KIDNAPPING! AFTER ALL, WE STILL HAVE NO PROOF! YOU SHOULDN'T HAVE HIT HER...

A MR, CLIMB OFF MY BACK, WATCH! AND STEP ON IT! SHE'S OUT COLD!



IT TOOK HIM OVER FIFTEEN MINUTES TO REACH THE MAYOR'S HOUSE IN TOWN. BY THAT TIME, THE OLD MAN HAD PERISHED.



I'LL GET THE BOOK AND COME RIGHT OUT! HOLD HER!

I STILL THINK YOU'RE CRAZY, HARRISON! IN LESS THAN THREE MINUTES THE MOON WILL BE FULL... AND THEN WE'LL KNOW FOR SURE!

MAYOR HARRISON HURRIED INTO THE HOUSE, STUMBLING DOWN THE ONLY LIT HALL TO THE DARK LIBRARY. HE STOPPED SUDDENLY AS HE REACHED THE DOOR... AND STARED AT THE GLEAMING EYES BURNING IN THE BLACKNESS BEYOND.



WHAT THE...? SOMEONE'S IN THERE! IT'S... IT'S...

MAYOR HARRISON MOVED FORWARD SLOWLY, HIS MULE READY. THEN, ALL AT ONCE, HE SAW IT... THE BARRY FACE... THE GLEAMING FANGS FLASHING FROM BEHIND THE SHARLING CRUEL MOUTH. HE SCREAMED...



IT'S THE WEREWOLF!

HE FIRED, POINT-BLANK, AGAIN AND AGAIN. THE VILE FEROCIOUS BEAST JUST STOOD THERE... SHARLING AT HIM.



MY GOD! THE SILVER BULLETS! THEY WON'T KILL HIM! I COULDN'T MISS... NOT AT THIS RANGE!

OUTSIDE, THE MEN HEARD THE SHOTS AND TORE FOR THE HOUSE... THE MAYOR STUMBLED TO THE LIBRARY LIGHT SWITCH, FLICKING IT ON. HE SMILED AS THE ROOM FLOODED THE ROOM.



YAAAAHHHHHH!

OR THERE? THE LIBRARY!

IT'S THE MAYOR! HE'S PROBABLY BEING ATTACKED BY THE WEREWOLF!

MAYOR ELWOOD HARRISON STOOD BEFORE THE FULL-LENGTH LIBRARY MIRROR, SHARLING AND SHRIeking, STARING IDENTICALLY AT THE BULLET HOLTS HE'D MADE WHEN HE'D SHOT AT HIS OWN REFLECTION.



GOOD LORD!

CHOKER!

AND THAT'S THE FIRST SCREAM-STORY IN MY NEW PUTRID PERIODICAL, PERIOD. NATURALLY, THEY SHOT MAYOR WEREWOLF AFTER THAT. IN FACT THEY PUMPED HIM SO FULL OF SILVER BULLETS, HE HAD TO BE LOWERED INTO HIS GRAVE WITH A DERRICK! THEN A COUPLE OF GRAVE-BORERS HEARD ABOUT THE SILVER... AND BUT THAT'S



ANOTHER STORY! I'LL DO THAT UP SOME OTHER TIME. NOW THE PAUL-KEEPER WAITS WITH HIS CREEPY CONTRIBUTION TO THIS MOROSE NEWS. I'LL BE BACK LATER. BYE, NOW.

# THE VAULT OF HORROR!

HOLD ON! AND NOW THAT C.R. HAS CURLED YOUR ARMED BLOOD, IT'S TIME FOR YOUR HOST IN THE VAULT OF HORROR, THE VAULT-KEEPER... NAMELY, ME, TO ENTERTAIN YOU WITH A SPINE-FRILLING, HAUNTING NOVELLETTE FROM MY CREEP COLLECTION. LET'S BEGIN! OH... LET'S NOT BEGIN YET! THIS IS A GOOD STORY ONE! IT'S CALLED...

## BLIND ALLEYS

THE "HOME" WAS OLD AND PAINT-STARVED AND DRAFTY AND BADLY IN NEED OF REPAIR... THE ROOF LEAKED AND THE WINDOWS RATTLED AND WERE COVERED WITH YEARS OF DUST AND GRIME... THE INMATES OF THE HOME WALKED GRIM-FACED AND SILENT THROUGH CRACKED PLASTER WALLS, OR SLEPT IN DINY ROOMS ON CRAWLING BEDS. THEY SHIVERED IN THE COLD WHEN WINTER CAME... WHEN THERE WAS NO STEAM TO WARM THE RUSTED RADIATORS...



...AND THEY SHIVERED IN THE HEAT WHEN SUMMER BURNED... WHEN LONG-BROKEN FANS LAY TOLD AND UNREPAIRED AND INABLE TO WAFT A BREATH OF COOL... THE RELIEF...



BUT THEY COULD NOT SEE THE PAINT-PEELED WALLS...THE DIRT CLOAKED WINDOWS...THE DUSTY AND COB-WEBBED HALLS OF THIS, THEIR HOME...THESE INMATES, THEY COULD NOT SEE THE ROACHES AND THE RATS SCAMPERING ACROSS THE UNWASHED FLOORS...



...AS THIS WAS A "HOME" FOR THE BLIND...FOR WRETCHED SOULS WHO LIVED IN WORLDS OF DARKNESS...WHO STARED WITH UNSEEING EYES AT THE MISERY AROUND THEM...AND YET *KNOW* AND *HATED* ALL OF IT...



FOR THE LOSS OF *ONE* SENSE ONLY TEMPS TO SHARPEN THE OTHERS...TO TUNE THEM MORE FINELY...TO MAKE THEM MORE *ACUTE*...THE INMATES *KNOW* BECAUSE THEY COULD TASTE...AND TOUCH...AND SMELL AND HEAR, THEY COULD TASTE THE SPOILED AND ROTTED FOOD PLACED BEFORE THEM AT MEALTIMES.



THEY COULD TOUCH THE STICKY, FILMY GOBBERS...THE DUST LAYERS COVERING EVERYTHING...



THEY COULD SMELL THE POUL DOORS OF MILDEW AND FAULTY PLUMBING AND POOR SANITATION AND NEGLECT...



THEY COULD HEAR THE RATS SCAMPERING AND THE ROACHES CRAWLING AND THE TERMITES BURNING AND THE LICE AND RED-BUGS AND FLIES AND A THOUSAND OTHER CREATURES OF FILTH THAT MOVED.



AND THEY COULD HEAR *OTHER* CREATURES TOO...*OTHER* CREATURES OF FILTH THAT MOVED. THEY COULD HEAR MR. SPENCER, THE HOME'S DIRECTOR, IN HIS OFFICE-APARTMENT DOWNSTAIRS, ENTERTAINING HIS LATEST LADY-FRIEND WITH THE MONEY HE'D SAVED ON THEM...THE INMATES...



THEY COULD HEAR HIS ALMOST NERVOUS LAUGHTER AND THE CLINKING OF CHAMPAGNE GLASSES. THEY COULD SMELL THE MOUTH-WATERING COOKS OF THE LATELIER SUPPER HE WAS ENJOYING, AND THEY COULD SEE, IN THEIR MINDS' EYES, THE LUXURIES WITH WHICH HE'D SELFISHLY SURROUNDED HIMSELF AT THEIR EXPENSE...



YES, SUMNER BRUNWALD HAD **INDEED** SURROUNDED HIMSELF WITH LUXURIES...PAID FOR WITH THE **ALLOTMENTS** GIVEN HIM FOR EACH BLIND INMATE. WHO PAINTED PLASTER DREAMY HALLS THAT THEY'D NEVER SEE, WHEN HE COULD HAVE AN AIR-CONDITIONER FOR THOSE HOTTER WINTER NIGHTS...



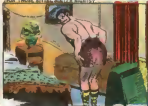
WHY LIVE THESE POOR MISERABLE BLIND FOOLS **BEAUTY** IF THEY COULD NOT **APPRECIATE** BEAUTY? SUMNER BRUNWALD'S **FELT** THAT WAY, SO HE'D **SKIPPED** ON THE INMATES...**CUT CORNERS HERE... DENIED THERE...** AND WITH THE **SURPLUS**, HE'D SUPPLIED HIMSELF WITH BEAUTY...



**FINE FURNITURE...GOOD BOOKS... PLUSH RUGS...EXPENSIVE DRAPES...** AN OCCASIONAL EVENING OF **FEMALE COMPANIONSHIP**...THEY WERE ALL SUMNER'S TO ENJOY. HE'D EVEN BOUGHT A **DOG**...A **VICIOUS** **DOG**...HE'D HAD A **GOOD REASON**...



WHY LAUNDER SHEETS AND BLANKETS AND CLOTHES OF DIRT-SMears AND SWEAT-STAINS THAT THEY'D NEVER SEE WHEN HE COULD HAVE A **HEATER** FOR THOSE BITTER WINTER NIGHTS?



FOR SUMNER KNEW THAT ANOTHER SENSE HAD REPLACED THE INMATES' SENSE OF SIGHT...A **DEEP-SEED** SENSE...**AWAKEN** EACH DAY, HE'D SEEN IT IN THEIR REDDED-BLIND **EYES**, IN THEIR SILENT GRIM **FACES**. HE'D SEEN THEM GRIPPING **HATE** SO HE'D BOUGHT THE **DOG** FOR **PROTECTION**...



AND WITH THE **DOG** AT HIS SIDE, SUMNER'S **TALKED-SELF-CONFIDENTLY** BEFORE THEM, KNOWING THAT HIS SIGHT AND THE **DOG'S** STRENGTH WOULD KEEP HIM FROM **HARM**...



AND SO, HE'D BEEN ABLE TO **CONTINUE** TO ENJOY HIS FIERCEST LITTLE ANIMENTS...LIKE **TRIPPING** HELPLESS UNSUSPECTING INMATES AS THEY'D TOTTER BLINDLY BY HIM. . .



...OR REMOVING SOMETHING THAT  
THEY'D COME TO KNOW WAS THERE  
AND COUNTED ON...



...OR ADDING SOMETHING NEW...



...OR BEING JUST MEAN...



YES, SUMNER'S **ABUSED** HIMSELF WITH HIS CHARGES  
INABILITY TO SEE HE'D BEEN **SARCASTIC** WITH HIS  
TORTURES. AND HE'D **BROWN FAT** ON HIS DENIALS.  
AND HIS CHARGES HAD SAT IN THEIR WORLD OF DARK-  
NESS AND **WAITED**. LISTENING.



...AND TONIGHT, THEIR OPPORTUNITY CAME...



LISTENING FOR THEIR **10:00** TONIGHT.



...SO THEY LURED THE DOG DOWN INTO THE OLD MUSTY CELLAR  
OF THE HOME WITH SOME MEAT-SCRAPE THEY'D SAVED FROM  
THEIR SCANT MEALS...



AND THEN THEY WAITED. THEY WAITED FOR SUMMER'S FRIENDS OF THE EVENING TO LEAVE. . .



THEY WAITED FOR SUMMER TO MISS HIS BOB. . .



...AND THEN THEY STRUCK? BLINDLY. UNSEEING... THEY SURROUNDED THEIR HATED ENEMY. . .



...AND DRAGGED HIM TO THE CELLAR TOO...TO ANOTHER WAITING CUBICLE. . .



BUT SUMMER'S ONLY ANSWER WAS THE SOFT WHINE OF THE BOB IN THE ADJOINING CUBICLE. . .



THEN THEY BEGAN TO WORK. THEY DRAGGED OUT OLD CHIMNEYS AND RUSTY NAILS AND LONG-LOST BARS. . .



AND THEY WENT THROUGH THE HOME AND CUT AND RIPPED AND CHOPPED THE LUMBER THEY NEEDED. . .





GUNNER LISTENED TO THE HAMMERING COMING THROUGH THE CELLAR. HE LISTENED TO THEIR SCOWLS AND CHATTER, AND HE WONDERED...



WHAT ARE THEY DOING? WHAT ARE THEY MAKING?

AND HE LISTENED AS THE NIGHT PASSED AND DAWN CAME, AND THE DOG IN THE CUBICLE NEXT DOOR GREW HUNGRY AND PACED AND GROVLED AND SCRATCHED AS ITS STOMACH GROWLED...



FEED BRUTUS, YOU FOOLS! HE'LL GET WILD IF YOU DON'T! HE'LL BE DANGEROUS!

WE KNOW, MR. ORIGINAL!

THE DAY PASSED AND NIGHT CAME AGAIN. GUNNER'S OWN STOMACH ACHED WITH HUNGER, AND STILL THEY HAMMERED AND SAWED AND LAUGHED AND TALKED...



WHAT ARE YOU MAKING? WHAT ARE YOU GOING TO DO?

YOU'LL SEE, MR. ORIGINAL!

THE DOG IN THE NEXT CUBICLE HOWLED ALL THAT NIGHT, BLOSSERING AND SHARLING AND SCRATCHING. GUNNER SHUDDERED. THE DOG WAS A BEAST, NOW... A HUNGER-CRAZED BEAST, AND THE HAMMERING WENT ON...



FOOD! GIVE ME SOME FOOD! PLEASE

DO YOU CALL WHAT YOU'VE BEEN FEEDING US FOOD, MR. ORIGINAL?

DAWN CAME AGAIN AND THE SECOND DAY PASSED. NEXT DOOR, THE DOG WAS FIGHTING WITH ITSELF, THROWING ITSELF AGAINST THE CUBICLE SIDES AND HOWLING MADLY...



BRUTUS WILL KILL ANYONE THAT GETS FOOT IN THERE NOW!

GUNNER HIMSELF WAS HALF-CRAZED WITH HUNGER AS THE THIRD NIGHT CAME. AND THEN, TOWARDS MIDNIGHT, THE HAMMERING STOPPED. THE CELLAR WAS SUDDENLY FLOODED WITH LIGHT. EVEN BRUTUS STOPPED SHARLING IN ANTICIPATION.



THEY'RE... THEY'RE OPENING MY CUBICLE.

THEY STOOD BEFORE HIM... DIRTY, SWEATED, TIRED FROM LONG HOURS OF LABOR... THE INVITED... THE BLIND UNCLENN CARPENTERS. GUNNER BLINKED OUT AT THEM...



COME, MR. ORIGINAL! YOU ARE FREE TO GO!

FOLLOW US, MR. ORIGINAL! WE BUILT THIS JUST FOR YOU! IT LEADS TO THE CELLAR STEPS... AND FREEDOM!

GUNNER STOOD UP AS THEY DARTED OFF. HE COULD HEAR THEIR FOOTSTEPS FAGE AS THEY ROUNDED CORNERS AND RAN DOWN LONG CORRIDORS THAT TURNED AND TWISTED AND DOUBLED BACK. GUNNER STARED...

THEY... THEY BUILT A MAZE?  
A PUZZLE? I HAVE TO  
FIGURE IT OUT?

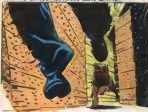


GUNNER LAUGHED TO HIMSELF AS HE STARTED OUT OF HIS CORNICE...

THE EASIEST IF I'M CAREFUL.  
IF I TAKE MY TIME... I'LL  
NEVER HAVE TO TOUCH THE  
WALLS... JUST WALK SLOWLY  
LIKE THIS CAREFUL



HE BRUSHED AGAINST THE RAZOR BLADES, SLASHING HIS FLESH. HE STUMBLED AND GOT UP, RAN ON FRIGID, WILD, DOWN THROUGH THE TWISTING, DOUBLING-BACK MAZE CORRIDORS WITH THE RAZOR-LINED WALLS AND THE SLITHERING HOUND CLOSE BEHIND.



AND THEN GUNNER SAW THE GLEAMING GLITTERING BLIVERS OF STEEL EMBEDDED IN THE MAZE WALLS...

RAZOR BLADES? THE WALLS ARE  
LINED WITH RAZOR BLADES?  
THEY WANT ME TO CUT MYSELF?

NOPE, WH  
GROSS WOULD I  
HARRY?



A SOUND BEHIND GUNNER PROVE  
HIS BLOOD? A SHRIEL AND A SCREAM  
OF A DOOR SPRING...

SAVING? HUNGER-GRAZED  
BROTHER? THEY'VE FREED  
HIM TOO!

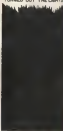


GUNNER BEGAN TO RUN. HE HAD TO  
REACH FREEDOM BEFORE THAT  
STARVED SOB COULD HIT HIM! HE RAN  
DOWN THE TWISTING MAZE CORRI-  
DORS... THE SOUND OF THE LOVING  
SMILING DOG BEHIND HIM

OH, LORD... LORD



AND THEN SOME HOT  
TURNED OUT THE LIGHTS?



DOPE? WHO'S TALK, BUT-  
HER? NOW, NOW? DON'T GO TO  
PIECES? AFTER ALL? IT'S  
ALMOST LIKE BEING BLIND?  
WELL, KIDDIES... THAT'S MY  
S FORTUNING - STORY FOR THE  
FIRST ISSUE OF G.H.T. NOW  
WAB? NOW IT'S TIME TO CLOSE

THE VAULT  
OF HORROR  
AND TURN YOU  
BACK TO HIM.

AS THE  
DISMEMBERED  
PARTS OF A  
CORPSE SAID  
WHEN THEY WERE  
SHIPPED TO THE  
UNDERTAKERS?  
"WE'LL GET  
TOGETHER  
AGAIN!" SHE?



# GONE TO SEED

It was back-breaking work, but it *had* to be done. Right away, too. He couldn't risk hiding the body of his wife in the cellar any longer . . . one of the farm hands might accidentally stumble over the corpse and start asking mighty dangerous questions. It was urgent, Dan Gret knew, to dispose of Emily right now, in this field he was plowing for spring planting. No sense in leaving a murdered wife around for the law to find!

Dan Gret heard the farm hands chattering over in the next field . . . he'd have to bawl 'em out about all this horsing around on *his* time. But at the moment he was too busy trying to gouge a hole in the ground. At first he'd been worried about the noise his shovel would make as he burrowed into the earth, but that had been taken care of without much trouble. The motor of the idling plow made so much noise that those loafers working for him wouldn't pay him any mind. And the bulk of the machine had been carefully maneuvered into place so that it acted as a shield between him and the overalled men seeding the adjoining acre. Thus, Dan Gret had resolved, was to be a *private* burial!

Dan Gret crouched low, in the shadow of the plow. By stretching out full length, he managed to tug the corpse free behind the grumbling machine and oulge it into the makeshift grave. There would be less than a foot of dirt blanketing Emily's body . . . but as soon as the hired hands got a day off he'd hurry back and dig a good deep hole to house the corpse. Within a few weeks the seeds'd be sprouting and the field would burst into furious bloom. Dan Gret grinned as he patted the last shovelful of dirt into place. Not only

was he getting rid of this devil he'd grown to hate . . . he was also helping to fertilize the coming crop!

He straightened up and surveyed his work with a critical eye. His eyes popped: one of Emily's hands was sticking up out of the soil! He lunged forward . . . and heard, with dread, the sound of voices approaching. Those bums who worked for him were coming across the field in his direction!

Dan Gret sprang toward the droning plow. If he could move the machine sideways just a few feet . . . set it directly over Emily's body . . . the danger of the moment could be averted. He turned once, to look back at the tell-tale mound . . . and his foot slid out from under him. His arms flailed the air frantically as he tried to regain his balance: his hand crashed sharply against the gear lever. The plow started immediately to swing in a rumbling circle, because of the way he had cramped the steering wheel. In motionless horror he saw the glittering blades bearing down on him!

Dan Gret screeched in alarm. Then the razor-sharp metal slashed through his flesh . . . the ponderous steel crunched over his writhing body . . . the huge wheels ground over him so that he was drenched in his own gushing blood.

By the time the farm hands reached him, Dan Gret was slashed almost beyond recognition. With gaping wonder the hired men stared down at Dan Gret's corpse . . . buried alongside that of his wife Emily, in the gory, blood-spattered grave. It was a real family plot!

SAGAS OF THE SEA, SHIPS, PLUNDER AND...

# PIRACY

BUT IF YOU *CAN'T FIND PIRACY* AT YOUR LOCAL NEWSSTAND, YOU CAN *SUBSCRIBE!* JUST FILL OUT THE COUPON AND MAIL, TOGETHER WITH *ONE HUNDRED PIECES OF GENT* (THAT'S ONE BUCK, LAND-LUBBERS!). TO:

OKAY, BLUE EATS. YOU SHAMSHARD ME!  
I ENCLOSE \$1.00 FOR THE NEXT EIGHT ISSUES  
OF BLACT!

**Figure 1**

1999, 2000, 2001, 2002, 2003, 2004, 2005, 2006, 2007, 2008, 2009, 2010, 2011, 2012, 2013, 2014, 2015, 2016, 2017, 2018, 2019, 2020, 2021, 2022, 2023, 2024, 2025, 2026, 2027, 2028, 2029, 2030, 2031, 2032, 2033, 2034, 2035, 2036, 2037, 2038, 2039, 2040, 2041, 2042, 2043, 2044, 2045, 2046, 2047, 2048, 2049, 2050, 2051, 2052, 2053, 2054, 2055, 2056, 2057, 2058, 2059, 2060, 2061, 2062, 2063, 2064, 2065, 2066, 2067, 2068, 2069, 2070, 2071, 2072, 2073, 2074, 2075, 2076, 2077, 2078, 2079, 2080, 2081, 2082, 2083, 2084, 2085, 2086, 2087, 2088, 2089, 2090, 2091, 2092, 2093, 2094, 2095, 2096, 2097, 2098, 2099, 2100, 2101, 2102, 2103, 2104, 2105, 2106, 2107, 2108, 2109, 2110, 2111, 2112, 2113, 2114, 2115, 2116, 2117, 2118, 2119, 2120, 2121, 2122, 2123, 2124, 2125, 2126, 2127, 2128, 2129, 2130, 2131, 2132, 2133, 2134, 2135, 2136, 2137, 2138, 2139, 2140, 2141, 2142, 2143, 2144, 2145, 2146, 2147, 2148, 2149, 2150, 2151, 2152, 2153, 2154, 2155, 2156, 2157, 2158, 2159, 2160, 2161, 2162, 2163, 2164, 2165, 2166, 2167, 2168, 2169, 2170, 2171, 2172, 2173, 2174, 2175, 2176, 2177, 2178, 2179, 2180, 2181, 2182, 2183, 2184, 2185, 2186, 2187, 2188, 2189, 2190, 2191, 2192, 2193, 2194, 2195, 2196, 2197, 2198, 2199, 2200, 2201, 2202, 2203, 2204, 2205, 2206, 2207, 2208, 2209, 2210, 2211, 2212, 2213, 2214, 2215, 2216, 2217, 2218, 2219, 2220, 2221, 2222, 2223, 2224, 2225, 2226, 2227, 2228, 2229, 2230, 2231, 2232, 2233, 2234, 2235, 2236, 2237, 2238, 2239, 2240, 2241, 2242, 2243, 2244, 2245, 2246, 2247, 2248, 2249, 2250, 2251, 2252, 2253, 2254, 2255, 2256, 2257, 2258, 2259, 2260, 2261, 2262, 2263, 2264, 2265, 2266, 2267, 2268, 2269, 2270, 2271, 2272, 2273, 2274, 2275, 2276, 2277, 2278, 2279, 2280, 2281, 2282, 2283, 2284, 2285, 2286, 2287, 2288, 2289, 2290, 2291, 2292, 2293, 2294, 2295, 2296, 2297, 2298, 2299, 2300, 2301, 2302, 2303, 2304, 2305, 2306, 2307, 2308, 2309, 2310, 2311, 2312, 2313, 2314, 2315, 2316, 2317, 2318, 2319, 2320, 2321, 2322, 2323, 2324, 2325, 2326, 2327, 2328, 2329, 2330, 2331, 2332, 2333, 2334, 2335, 2336, 2337, 2338, 2339, 2340, 2341, 2342, 2343, 2344, 2345, 2346, 2347, 2348, 2349, 2350, 2351, 2352, 2353, 2354, 2355, 2356, 2357, 2358, 2359, 2360, 2361, 2362, 2363, 2364, 2365, 2366, 2367, 2368, 2369, 2370, 2371, 2372, 2373, 2374, 2375, 2376, 2377, 2378, 2379, 2380, 2381, 2382, 2383, 2384, 2385, 2386, 2387, 2388, 2389, 2390, 2391, 2392, 2393, 2394, 2395, 2396, 2397, 2398, 2399, 2400, 2401, 2402, 2403, 2404, 2405, 2406, 2407, 2408, 2409, 2410, 2411, 2412, 2413, 2414, 2415, 2416, 2417, 2418, 2419, 2420, 2421, 2422, 2423, 2424, 2425, 2426, 2427, 2428, 2429, 2430, 2431, 2432, 2433, 2434, 2435, 2436, 2437, 2438, 2439, 2440, 2441, 2442, 2443, 2444, 2445, 2446, 2447, 2448, 2449, 2450, 2451, 2452, 2453, 2454, 2455, 2456, 2457, 2458, 2459, 2460, 2461, 2462, 2463, 2464, 2465, 2466, 2467, 2468, 2469, 2470, 2471, 2472, 2473, 2474, 2475, 2476, 2477, 2478, 2479, 2480, 2481, 2482, 2483, 2484, 2485, 2486, 2487, 2488, 2489, 2490, 2491, 2492, 2493, 2494, 2495, 2496, 2497, 2498, 2499, 2500, 2501, 2502, 2503, 2504, 2505, 2506, 2507, 2508, 2509, 2510, 2511, 2512, 2513, 2514, 2515, 2516, 2517, 2518, 2519, 2520, 2521, 2522, 2523, 2524, 2525, 2526, 2527, 2528, 2529, 2530, 2531, 2532, 2533, 2534, 2535, 2536, 2537, 2538, 2539, 2540, 2541, 2542, 2543, 2544, 2545, 2546, 2547, 2548, 2549, 2550, 2551, 2552, 2553, 2554, 2555, 2556, 2557, 2558, 2559, 2560, 2561, 2562, 2563, 2564, 2565, 2566, 2567, 2568, 2569, 2570, 2571, 2572, 2573, 2574, 2575, 2576, 2577, 2578, 2579, 2580, 2581, 2582, 2583, 2584, 2585, 2586, 2587, 2588, 2589, 2590, 2591, 2592, 2593, 2594, 2595, 2596, 2597, 2598, 2599, 2600, 2601, 2602, 2603, 2604, 2605, 2606, 2607, 2608, 2609, 2610, 2611, 2612, 2613, 2614, 2615, 2616, 2617, 2618, 2619, 2620, 2621, 2622, 2623, 2624, 2625, 2626, 2627, 2628, 2629, 2630, 2631, 2632, 2633, 2634, 2635, 2636, 2637, 2638, 2639, 2640, 2641, 2642, 2643, 2644, 2645, 2646, 2647, 2648, 2649, 2650, 2651, 2652, 2653, 2654, 2655, 2656, 2657, 2658, 2659, 2660, 2661, 2662, 2663, 2664, 2665, 2666, 2667, 2668, 2669, 2670, 2671, 2672, 2673, 2674, 2675, 2676, 2677, 2678, 2679, 2680, 26



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**A POINT OF ORDER! IF YOU'RE EXPECTING E.C.'S NEWEST HORROR MAG TO BE BETTER THAN TALES FROM THE CRYPT, THE VAULT OF HORROR, AND THE HAUNT OF FEAR, YOU'LL BE SADLY DISAPPOINTED! IT'S ONLY JUST AS GOOD!**



**INVESTIGATE** YOUR FAVORITE NEWSSTAND FOR THE FIRST "JUST-AS-GOOD" ISSUE! HOWEVER IF YOU'RE TIED UP WITH RED TAPE (ADHESIVE, THAT IS!) AND YOU'D RATHER **SUBSCRIBE**, FILL OUT THE COUPON AND SEND IN, TOGETHER WITH AN **UNDOCTORED PHOTO** OF GEORGE WASHINGTON ON A \$1.00 BILL YOU'LL RECEIVE 8 **UNCROPPED** ISSUES IN THE MAIL.

THE CRYPT-KEEPER  
ROOM 106  
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HERE'S MY BUCK. SEND ME THE NEXT 8 ISSUES OF YOUR NEWEST MAG, **THE CRYPT OF TERROR**.

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HERE'S HOW ONE FAILURE TURNED HIS MISERABLE LIFE INTO A HORRIBLE...

# SUCCESS STORY



THE POLICE SURGEON INSERTED THE HOLLOW NEEDLE INTO ELMER'S ARM AND SECONDS LATER THE SOORUM PENTATHAL SOLUTION WAS FLOWING INTO HIS BLOODSTREAM, TAKING ITS EFFECT. ELMER'S SHRILL MANICUAL LAUGHTER FAGED INTO A WHEDDING SARR. THE PABID FURY OF HIS CONVULSIVE STRUGGLING SURSIED INTO HELPLESS EXHAUSTION. THE THREE BRANWY POLICEMEN RELEASED THEIR HOLD THEN, AND MOPPED THEIR SWEAT-BEADED BROWNS. ELMER PRESTON SLUMPED LIMPLY ON THE SHABBY SOFA, HIS FLACID FACE CHANGED TO A YELLO-BREENISH HUE. HIS USUALLY SOFT, LIQUID-BROWN EYES WERE SLAZED AND STARRING ROK. HE STARTED TO SPEAK, WITHOUT EMOTION, IN A GOWERING MONOTONE...

I'M DEAD I DID IT! IT...IT HAD TO BE THIS WAY. DON'T YOU SEE?

AND, MR. PRESTON, WE DON'T NEED YOUR BETTER TELL US ABOUT IT!



ELMER'S FACE TOOK ON A THOUGHTFUL EXPRESSION AND HIS EYES SHADED OVER WITH A DISTANT LOOK, HAUNTED WITH MEMORIES OF THE PAST. HE BOMED DEEPLY, THEN SPOKE AGAIN IN A COLORLESS DRAWLING MONOTONE...

I...I WAS ALWAYS A FURID MAN. IT'S NOT GOOD FOR A MAN TO BE THING... ESPECIALLY A MARRIED MAN. ESPECIALLY A MAN MARRIED TO A WOMAN LIKE IDA!



"MAYBE WE COULD HAVE BEEN HAPPY TOGETHER IN OUR LITTLE APARTMENT... IDA AND I. BUT ONE EVENING HER FOLKS CAME TO DINNER. HER FATHER WAS ALL TENSE, BURSTING WITH NEWS THAT HE FINALLY EXPLODED ON ME AT DINNER. . .

ELMER, YOU MUST BEEL WONDERING HOW COME MR. AND I DON'T GIVE YOU TWO A WEDDING RFT

WHY, NO, MR. WALLACE, I NEVER



CH. Chatterbox



I SHOULD HAVE SAID, "NO THANK  
YOU", BUT I CAN NO HIDDEN TRAP  
AT THE MOMENT, AND WHEN, EXCUSE  
GOOD WILL, MR. WALLACE OFFERED  
ME HIS HAND, I GRASPED IT GRATE-  
FULLY...



NOW THAT I THINK BACK, IT SEEMS  
THAT DA MUST HAVE KNOWN ALL  
THE TIME. BUT THAT NIGHT, SHE HAD  
TO HER FATHER, THREW HER ARMS  
AROUND HIS NECK, AND WEPT FOR  
JOY...



"FOR AN ECCENTRIC TWO WEEKS, MA AND I HAD  
HUNTED. WE FOUND THIS PLACE... SMALL, COMFORTA-  
BLE, A DREAM COTTAGE. THE DOWN PAYMENTS FURNISH-  
ING THE PLACE EMPTIED MY BANK ACCOUNT, BUT I  
WAS DELICIOUSLY HAPPY. THE SUNDAY AFTER WE MOVED  
IN, THE WALLACES CAME TO SEE OUR NEW..."



"I WAS BEING TAKEN FOR A WELL-PLANNED RIDE...  
AND MY LOVING BRIDE HAD THE STEERING WHEEL IN HER  
OWN LITTLE CLUTCHING HANDS..."



"THAT WAS THE FIRST PAINFUL RUMBLING OF THE TEM-  
PEST YET TO COME. THE WALLACES SANK UP THEIR  
APARTMENT AND MOVED IN WITH US. MA WAS A MOST  
GENEROUS DAUGHTER..."



"TEMPORARY, SHE SAID! BUT BEFORE I KNOW IT, THEY'VE BEEN THERE FIVE WEEKS. I COULD JUST ABOUT MANAGE TO MEET MY BILLS, IF THERE WEREN'T OTHER DEMANDS ON MY SMALL INCOME.



"AFTER MR. WALLACE GOT HIS T.V. SET, MR. WALLACE HAD A REQUEST:



IDA SPOKE BITTERLY AND LOVELY...LOUD ENOUGH FOR HER PARENTS TO HEAR. THEY ACCEPTED IT AS AN INVITATION TO JOIN HER PIERCE MANAGABLE...



"MONTHS WENT BY. MY BLUNDER WHEN AND WEATHER UPON ME LIKE A BILLSKOTE. ONE DAY I FOUND THE COURAGE TO TALK TO IDA...



"THE CORNERS OF IDA'S MOUTH DROPPED, AND HER EYES WERE COLE AND HARD... PIERCING ME THROUGH AS SHE SPOKE...



"DRIVEN MORE BY DESPERATION AND DEBT THAN BY THEIR BODOR, I FINALLY GATHERED THE COURAGE TO ASK MY BOSS, MR. BENTLEY, FOR A RAISE. BUT THE MINUTE I ENTERED HIS PLUSH OFFICE...





"I HAD UNCOVERED A GEM BY COMPLAINING AGAINST IDA'S POLICE, AND FROM THAT DAY ON, A SPIRITFUL TORRENT OF CRITICISM FLOODED THROUGH THE FLOODGATES AT ME..."

"HOW COULD I TELL THEM MR BENTLY HAD MORE THAN REFUSED ME A RAISE? THEY SAID HE NO PEACE, FROM THE MOMENT I CAME HOME FROM WORK..."



WHAT ABOUT THAT RAISE I TOLD YOU TO ASK FOR, ELMERT? WHEN ARE YOU GOING TO GET ENOUGH NERVE?

ASK FOR? YOU DON'T ASK FOR A RAISE? YOU DEMAND IT? THAT'S THE ONLY WAY TO GET AHEAD... BY DEMANDING...



WELL, ELMERT, HOW'D YOU MAKE OUT? DID YOU TELL THEM MORE OF YOURS TO COME AHEAD OR GET A NEW BOY?

I TOLD HIM NOTHIN' MR WALLACE. NOBODY TALKS THAT WAY TO MR. BENTLY!

"...AND I'D ALWAYS GET THE SAME RESPONSE..."

"EVERY MEAL BECAME A NIGHT-MARE, FROM THE TIME I'D SIT DOWN..."

"I'D FORCE MYSELF TO EAT, AND THE PASTELUS FOOD WOULD SOAR ON THE WAY DOWN..."



WELL, DIDN'T... GOOD LORD, MAN? DON'T YOU WANT TO GET AHEAD IN THIS WORLD?!



YOU'RE A FAILURE, ELMERT! I CAN'T STAND A FAILURE!

ALL MY LIFE I FIGHTED TO GET AHEAD...



DON'T WASTE YOUR BREATH, HERBERT! YOU CAN'T TURN A JELLY-FISH INTO A TIGER SHARK, I ALWAYS SAY!

"SUDDENLY THERE'D BE A VIOLENT CHURNING IN THE PIT OF MY STOMACH AND I'D HAVE TO RUN FROM THE ROOM..."

"I'D WALK IT TO THE BATHROOM, MOST OF THE TIME... AND ALL BUT HEAVE UP MY INSIDES..."



SO DON'T RUN! IF I WERE IN YOUR SHOES, I WOULDN'T WANT TO HEAR THE TRUTH ABOUT MYSELF... EITHER!

BEE? YOU TRY TO TELL HIM SOMETHING FOR HIS OWN GOOD AND HE RUNS OFF IN A HUFF! HE'S INSULTED!



YOU MARRIED A REAL LEMON, IDA!

HE'LL NEVER AMOUNT TO ANYTHIN'!

OH, DON'T...

"NOW DID THE THUNDER STOP WHEN WE WENT TO BED. IDA WOULD HAD ME TELL SHE WAS HOARSE, AND I'D COVER MY HEAD WITH MY PILLOW, BUT I'D STILL HEAR."

ONLY SIXTY-SEVEN MISERABLE DOLLARS A WEEK... IN THESE DAYS. I'M ASHAMED FOR MOTHER AND DADDY TO KNOW... BUT OF COURSE THEY DO KNOW. THEY KNOW THE KIND OF CLOTHES I WEAR... THEY SEE THE FURNITURE... THREADBARE... JUNK!

PLEASE... IDA! IT'S LATE.



"WHEN I'D HEARD ALL I COULD STAND, I'D HURRY FROM THE LIVING ROOM."

NEVER MIND, MOTHER! FROM NOW ON, I'LL DO THE BUYING! WE CAN'T AFFORD MUCH, MAYBE, BUT WHAT WE DO GET WILL BE THE BEST!



'EVER A LOOKED DOOR WAS NO GUARANTEE OF PRIVACY

ARE YOU GOING TO STAY IN THERE ALL NIGHT, ELMER? LISTEN... ABOUT THE TV SET! I WAS DOWNTOWN TODAY, TALKING TO A DEALER ABOUT A TRADE-IN ON A LARGER SCREEN, AND...



"SO THE MONTHS DROGGED INTO YEARS AND THE WALLACES STAYED ON WITH US... BASSING ME, HOUSING... COMPLAINING... ALWAYS COMPLAINING..."

YOU REMEMBER WHEN YOU BOUGHT THAT WASHING MACHINER? I TOLD YOU IT DIDN'T PAY TO BUY CHEAP! WELL, IT'S READY FOR THE JUNKHEAP!

IT WON'T SET LONELY THERE, BELIEVE ME. IT'LL HAVE THAT STINKING TWELVE-INCH-SCREEN T.V. SET FOR COMPANY.



'I WAS TOO TIMID TO ADMIT IT TO MYSELF THEN, BUT I'D COME TO HATE IDA AND HER MOTHER AND FATHER. I'D BE SHAVING IN THE MORNING AND MY WIFE WOULD COME IN AND THE DAY'S BASHING WOULD BEGIN..."

I DON'T SEE WHY DADDY SHOULD HAVE TO KEEP POUNDING IT INTO YOU! YOU SHOULD WANT TO GET AHEAD YOURSELF, ELMER.



"THIS MORNING, AS ALWAYS, WE SAT AT THE BREAKFAST TABLE AND I LISTENED TO THEM TALKING, TALKING... AND HEARD, THE STORM GATHERED. I COULD HEAR IT RUMBLING..."

A MAN WITHOUT AMBITION IS A WALKING CORPSE, ELMER! I KNOW I'M REPEATING MYSELF, BUT TRY TO BE A SUCCESS. TRY, ELMER. ELMER? YOU LISTENING?

MOM! ONLY YES, YES, I'LL TRY!



"AND TODAY, FOR THE FIRST TIME IN YEARS, I DIDN'T GO TO WORK. I WANDERED AROUND THE STREETS, WONDERING WHAT WAS WRONG WITH ME... LISTENING TO THE STORM THUNDERING IN THE DISTANCE, COMING CLOSER... CLOSER... READY TO BREAK AT ANY MOMENT..."

WHY DON'T I GET AHEAD? EVERYBODY ELSE DOES! I'VE GOT TO! I'VE... HEN... HEN... I'VE... EN... EN...



"WHEN I GOT HOME THAT NIGHT, LATE FOR DINNER, THEY JUST STARED AT ME...IDA AND MR. WALLACE AND MRS. WALLACE. THE STORM RUMBLED AROUND...THREATENING...THREATENING TO BREAK...THENE...IN MY THROBBING HEAD...AND I JUST STARED BACK AT THEM..."



"I RAN OUT...BUT NOT TO THE BATH-ROOM THIS TIME. I RAN TO THE KITCHEN...THROUGH THE RAGING STORM, I CAME BACK WITH THE MEAT CLEAVER..."



AND SLOWLY, THE POLICEMEN FOLLOWED ELMER'S WILD GAZE TO THE DINNERTABLE...TO THE MEAT PLACE SETTINGS...AND THE PLATES WITH THEIR MARCHING PARS STANDING BACK AT THEM...



"THEN, SUDDENLY, THE STORM TORE LOOSE...HOWLING, SCREAMING-BLACK AROUND ME...THUNDERING...WILD TEMPEST-FURY AND ABOVE THE STORM, THEIR VOICES...THEIR RASTY VOICES..."



"THE STORM SHRINKED IN MY BRAIN. WHITE BLINDING LIGHTNING FLASHES EXPLODED. THE BLACK FURY TURNED RED, RED, SPURTING RED AS I SAID THE CLEAVER..."



ELMER PRESTON STARED STRAIGHT AHEAD, SMILING. THE WILD GLEAM RETURNED TO HIS EYES, AND HE CHOKED OUT MORE WORDS BETWEEN SHORT, HIGH-PITCHED BURSTS OF LAUGHTER...



# THE WITCH'S CAULDRON!

HEE-HEE! AND NOW IT'S WIND-UP SPOT IN C.K.'S NEW CREEPS COMIC, AND YOUR DRIVER-CHEF, THE OLD WITCH, IS READY TO STIR UP HER GROSSY CAULDRON AND LAKE OUT A LURID LITERARY LUNCHEON. THIS TASTY TALE OF TERROR-FREMORE IS TOLD BY ONE TONY BARRETT. LISTEN, NOW, AS HE SARFS OUT THE DELIRIUM DISH HE CALLS...

## TATTER UP!



DELIRIUM

MET I'M TONY BARRETT. I'M NOT A BAD-LOOKIN' BUT I'M FOUNG, FOD THIRTY-FOUR. OYAK, SO NOW COME I COULD SIT AROUND ON A HOT-REDDIN' COUCH, HOLDIN' HANDS WITH A SHAGGLE-TOOTHED HAG NAMED FANNY OGDEN. *HOW COME I COULD STAND* THE MILDW-YELLOWED WALL PAPERS... JTHE CRACKED CEILING... THE WHOLE HOUSE STINKIN' LIKE THE MOUTH OF A DUG-UP COFFIN... AND THE STINK OF FANNY HERSELF? YEAH, *THAT'S RIGHT! YOU GOT THE PICTURE!* FANNY OGDEN WAS SUPPOSED TO BE *LEAGUE*!...

I... I BEEN MEANN' T' ASK YOU, FANNY. I JUST DON'T KNOW *NOW!* I... I BEEN MEANN' T' ASK YOU IF YOU'LL MARRY ME!

OH, TONY! I'VE BEEN PRAYING YOU'D ASK ME... *DREAMING* OF IT... BUT NEVER REALLY BELIEVING YOU WOULD! OH, YES, TONY! YES! I WILL MARRY YOU!



SURE I WANTED THAT WOOLGONE WITCH FOR A WIFE. I WANTED TO MARRY THE HUNDRED GRAND FORTUNE TO HEARD ABOUT. THE DOOM HER FIRST HUSBAND HAD LEFT HER, THE MISERABLE WIDOW WAS SUPPOSED TO HAVE *EVERY LAST CENT* OF IT. *NOL THERE*, IN THAT FOUL-SMELLING FILTHY HOUSE...

THEN I QUINN...CHORE THIS CALLS FOR A KISS!

IT'S BEEN SO LONG SINCE I'VE BEEN KISSED, TONY!



WELL, I'LL STOP THE OBSCUREST DETAILS EXCEPT TO SAY THAT FANNY BECAME MRS. TOMMY BARRETT, AND I STARTED HITTING THE BOTTLE TO BRACE MYSELF AGAINST LIVING WITH HER...



AREN'T YOU COMING UP, MONEY-BURN? IT'S LATE...

YOU GO AHEAD, FANNY! I'LL BE UP IN AN HOUR OR SO. DON'T WAIT UP.

TROUBLE WITH DINNER? WAS IT USED TO GET ME DOWN, IT'D WORRIE. I'D WORRY REAL BAD...



MAYBE THERE **AIN'T** NO COOKIN, MAYBE I GOT A **BUR STEER** FROM THE **BUT** THAT **FOLD** ME

AFTER THE FIRST TWO WEEKS, I GOT REAL DISGUSTED. THERE WAS NO HINT OF THE BOON.



I'M BEGINNIN' T' THINK I'VE BEEN A **DOCKER**, SADDLEIN' MYSELF WITH A **DRICK-UP** WITHERED **EXCUSE** FOR A **FEMALE**. I'LL **WAKE UP** ONE DAY AND FIND OUT THERE **AIN'T** NO HUNDRED S'S WELL, IN A **PIR'S** STE I WILL!

SO I WENT UP INTO THE BEDROOM WHERE FANNY SAT WITH THAT STRABBLED WOP OF HERB UP IN CURLERS. BUT I DIDN'T LOOK AT FANNY THERE. I HEADED FOR THE CLOSET...FOR MY SUITCASE.



FANNY IS THERE SOMETHING **WROONG**?

FEAR, BABY! YOU AND ME! I'M **CLEARIN'** OUT.

I BOUNCED MY SUITCASE ONTO THE BED AND TOSSED MY CLOTHES INTO IT. MY BRIDE JUMPED UP LIKE A BEET STUNG HER, AND SHE THREW HER SNEY ARM AROUND ME.



TOMMY! PLEASE! DON'T LEAVE ME! PLEASE DON'T!

WE MADE A MISTAKE! FORGET IT! FORGET ME, FANNY!

TOMMY I **KNOW** I'M **UGLY**. UGLY AND OLD. BUT I'M **WICK**. I NEVER TOLD YOU, DID I? I'VE GOT A LOT OF **MONEY**. AND I **LOVE** YOU, TOMMY... AS MUCH AS I CAN. YOU'RE **HANDSOME**. **YOUNG**. I HAVE JUST A **FEW** YEARS LEFT. STAY WITH ME AND MAKE THEM **HAPPY** YEARS, DEAR, AND WHEN I'M **GONE**, ALL THAT **MONEY** WILL BE **YOURS**!

OHAY, BABY! DRAFT YOU TALKED ME INTO IT!



WELL, IT TURNED OUT THERE **WAS** MONEY AFTER ALL. THE **GUYS** WERE **RIGHT**. SO I DID MY **BEST** TO MAKE FANNY **HAPPY**. I **STAYED**. BUT I WONDERED WHAT SHE **LIVED ON**, IF SHE NEVER **SPENT** ANY OF HER **DOWRY**. AND ONE DAY, I FOUND OUT...



WAS **WAS**... AT NO...

YOU! THE **GUYS** I **WENT**! THE **GUYS** THAT **TOLD** ME ABOUT HER...

I'M A **RABBIT**! MRS. OGDEN ALWAYS SELLS ME HER OLD **RATS**...



MRS. OGDEN IS MRS. **BARRETT** NOW, MISTER. MY **WIFE**? DON'T YOU **REMEMBER** WHY YOU **TOLD** ME ABOUT HER...

YOU HAVE A **NICE** **WIFE**, SIR. SHE'S VERY **GOOD** TO ME. SHE ALWAYS HAS **RAIS** TO **SELL** ME. I'M A **RABBIT**...



MAYBE I'M **WRONG** BUT I COULD **BREAK** IT WAS FOR I MET THAT **NIGHT**...

BUT AT THAT **MOMENT**, **FANNY** TRUMBLED DOWN THE **STAIRS** WITH A **LOAD** OF OLD **RATS**... MEN'S **SUITS**... WOMEN'S **DRESSES**, **KIDS'** **CLOTHES**. THE **RABBIT** **CRINED** LIKE AN **IDOT** WHEN HE **SAW** THEM...



**FINE**, MRS. **BARRETT**! **SEVEN** **PENNY** **FINES** YOU **GET** **SEVEN** **DOLLARS** FOR **THESE**! **FOR** THAT **OLD** **LARDERET** **WOMAN**!

THE OLD CREEP STOPPED COLD AND GAVE ME A FIGHT STARE, LIKE I'D INSULTED HIM. FANNY TRIED TO COVER UP...



TONY DON'T MEAN ANYTHING. HE JUST DOESN'T UNDERSTAND...

FEAR, MA. NO HARD FEELINGS! IF YOU WANT TO OVERPAKE IT'S YOUR BUSINESS...

YOUR **WIFE** HAS BEEN **GOOD** TO ME... AND I TRY TO BE **GOOD** TO HER. HERE YOU ARE, MRS. OGDEN... MRS. **BARRETT**!

AFTER THE **RABBIT** PAID FANNY, HE LEFT. I FELT PRETTY SHOK INSIDE... YOU CAN IMAGINE...



WHAT'S WITH THIS **RAB** BUSINESS, **BART**? WHERE DO YOU **GET** THEM?

WHY I **PICK** THEM UP, TONY... **HERE** AND **THERE**...

NICE, RIGHT? BEIN' MARRIED TO AN OLD RAB-BIGHT ENOUGH! NOW I HAD TO FIND OUT SHE WAS A **RAB-PICKER** BESIDES. THAT WAS THE LAST STRAW. I'D MADE UP MY MIND WHEN FANNY ANNOUNCED AFTER LUNCH...



I'M GOING **OUT** BEIN' GONE IN TOO **LONG**! WHILE I'M **GONE**!

FEAR FANNY! **BUNE**!

FANNY DIDN'T SAY WHAT SHE WAS GON' OUT FOR, BUT I KNEW IT WAS TO DO SOME **RAB-PICKIN'**. WELL, THAT WAS OKAY WITH ME. THAT GAVE ME TIME TO RUMMAGE THROUGH THE RUBBLE CRUMMED ATIC AFTER SOME PORN'S OF MY OWN...



I GOT TO FIND THAT **DOUGH**! I GOT TO FIND THAT **DOUGH** AND **GET** **AWAY**! ME, MARRIED TO A **TOAD-FACED** **RAB-PICKER**! I'LL GO **HITS** IF I HAVE T'KEEP ON **LIVIN'** WITH HER!

I TURNED THAT OTTIC UPSIDE DOWN BUT IT WAS NO SOAP. I DIDN'T FIND A THING.



IT'S GOT TO BE IN THE HOUSE SOMEWHERE! YOU JUST DON'T KNOW A HUNDRED BRAND IN A HOUSEHOLE! I'LL FIND IT IF...

TONY! WHERE ARE YOU TONY?

IT WAS FANNIE SCALLIN' ME. I WENT DOWN AND GOT NAUSEOUS LOOKIN' AT HER...THAT PATCHED AND PAID BRASS. THE TWO DIFFERENT COLORED COTTON STOCKING'S...AND ON HER FEET...NO KIDDIN'!...SHE HAD A BIRTY SACK STUFFED FULL OVER HER SHOULDER...



LOOKS LIKE HUNTY WAS PRETTY GOOD TODAY, FANNY. HOW MUCH YOU GOT 'TIGHT BUCKS WORTH. WABBE TEN?

WHERE WERE YOU TONY?

I COULDN'T STAND THE MESS AROUND THIS HOUSE ANY MORE, SO I STARTED CLEANIN' UP, IN THE ATTIC.



IN THE ATTIC? DR. WELL, THAT'S NICE.

FANNY DIDN'T SEEM DISTURBED ABOUT ME WORKIN' AROUND UP IN THE ATTIC, SO I FIGURED THAT'S NOT WHERE THE HUNDRED B'S WAS STASHED AWAY. I WAS ALL ON EDGE WAITIN' FOR HER TO GO OUT AGAIN BE' I COULD START LOOKIN' SOMEWHERE ELSE. BUT FIRST THE BABMAN TURNED UP.



I COULD SWEAR HE'S THE SAME GUY THAT TOLD ME ABOUT FANNY.

SUCH NICE RASS, MRS. BARNETT! SUCH BEAU-TIFUL RASS.

AFTER A WHILE I GOT MAD AND RIPPED OPEN THE MATTRESS ON THE OLD MARRIED BED. I WAS SO BUSY, I DIDN'T HEAR FANNY SNEAK UPSTAIRS AND CREEP INTO THE ROOM LIKE A SCRAWNY OLD CAT. BUT SINCE ONLY I FELT HER THERE.



FANNY... I...

I'M GLAD TO SEE YOU'RE STILL CLEANIN' UP, TONY.

FINALLY FANNY LEFT WITH HER RABBACK, AND I WENT TO WORK ON ONE OF THE UPSTAIRS ROOMS, PERLIN' THROUGH BATTERED MOTH-EATEN FURNITURE, FLOWIN' THROUGH THE TRASH-STUFFED CLOSET...



IT'LL TAKE ME MONTHS TO FIND THAT COUGH - A FEAR, MAYBE... UNLESS I'M LUCKY.

I COULD TELL SHE KNEW WHAT I WAS UP TO, 'CAUSE SHE HAD A SMILE INSIDE THAT BLINDED THROUGH HER EYES. SHE WAS LAUGHIN' IN HER BUTS 'CAUSE I COULDN'T FIND HER HOUND, AND IT MADE ME MAD...



FEAR, THAT'S WHAT I'M DOIN'... CLEANIN' UP THIS FILTHY PESTER! MAYBE YOU DON'T LIKE THAT.

I SAID I'M GLAD, HONEY...

THAT'S HOW IT WENT FOR WEEKS. EVERY DAY THAT ARMAN CAME AND GOT PRACTICALLY DELIRIOUS OVER SOME POL. BUCK MY WIFE SOLD.

LOVELY... ABSOLUTELY  
LOVELY. MISS. GARNETT

AND EVERY DAY, AFTER SHE WENT OUT BORDOWEN' THROUGH LONG-KNIVES-WHAT TRASH FOR RAGS, I

I GOTTA FIND IT  
SOON! I GOTTA GET  
OUT OF HERE! EVERY  
MINUTE I SPEND IS  
FUEL TO MY LOVE  
AND THAT'S THE ONLY WAY

AND SHE'D COME BACK...KNOWING WHAT I WAS UP TO, BUT I DIDN'T GIVE A HELL EXCEPT THAT SHE WAS ALL THE TIME LAUGHING AT ME AND IT'S GOT ALL CHOKED UP WITH HATE FOR ME.

YOU MEN ARE ALL ALONE. WHEN YOU TRY TO *FART UP* A HOUSE, IT LOOKS *WORSE* THAN WHEN YOU *STARTED*.

FINALLY I COULDN'T TAKE IT NO MORE. I COULDN'T STAND FRANKS STAYING IN THE HOUSE-LAWN. I COULDN'T STAND LOOKING AT HIM. SO ONE DAY, I WENT DOWN THE CELLAR AND STARTED DRINKING. BUT NOT FOR HER HONOR.

ANON, LET HER COME DOWN ANON  
JUST LET HER COME

AND WHEN SHE GOT HOME THAT DAY, I LISTENED TO HER CALL ME, BUT I DIDN'T ANSWER. I MADE SOME NOISE AND WAITED.

WHY, TOM? HOW COULD YOU  
YOU'RE GOING TO PUT ALL  
THE OLD TRASH INSTEAD OF  
HAVING TO CARRY IT  
OUTSIDE

AND COME OFF IT,  
BABY! YOU KNOW  
THAT'S NOT WHAT  
THE SONG!

FANNIE LOOKED AT THE REAL COLD LINE AND WHISPERED  
SUGGESTIVELY

OF COURSE! YOU'RE DREAMING FOR  
TREASURE... A HUNDRED  
THOUSAND DOLLAR  
TREASURE!

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FANNY COULD SEE BY MY FACE I WAS LEVELIN'. IT WAS LIKE SHE'D NEVER EXPECTED THIS TURN OF EVENTS, SHE LET OUT A LITTLE SQUEAL AND STARTED TO CRY. I WRENK THE ROCK HARD.

**Abstract**





HEAVEN KNOWS I THINK  
HE? I LOVED HER...

EXPLAINING HOW AGE AND COLOR NOW, I HEAR A FUNNY RING OF MUSIC IN MY HEAD AND LAUGHING... I HEAR FUNNY LAUGHING...



THE DUFFY-KEE PER  
NEW MOROCCO MUCH  
HAG, WE THREE  
SHOW LUNATIC WILL  
SEE YOU AGED IN  
MY PUTRO PERMOR  
THE HAUNT OF  
FEAR? TELL THEM,  
KEEP A STIFF!

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